mamotte shugogetten

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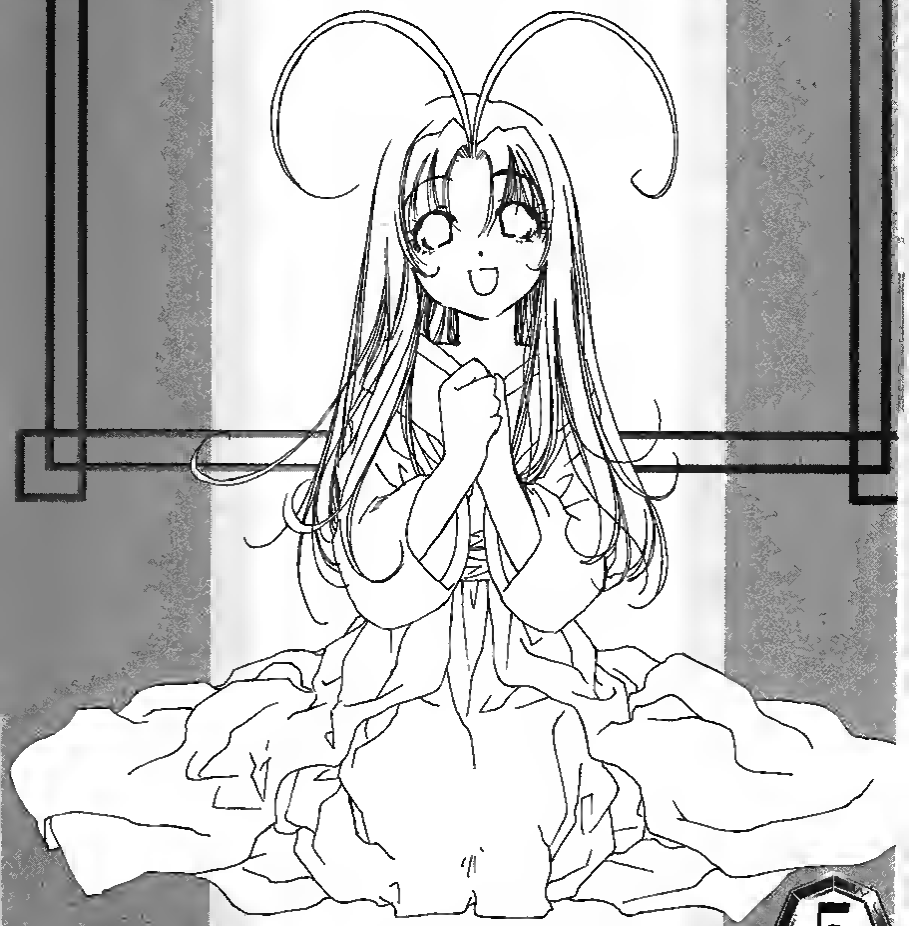
minene sakurano

mamotte shugogetten



Minene Sakurano

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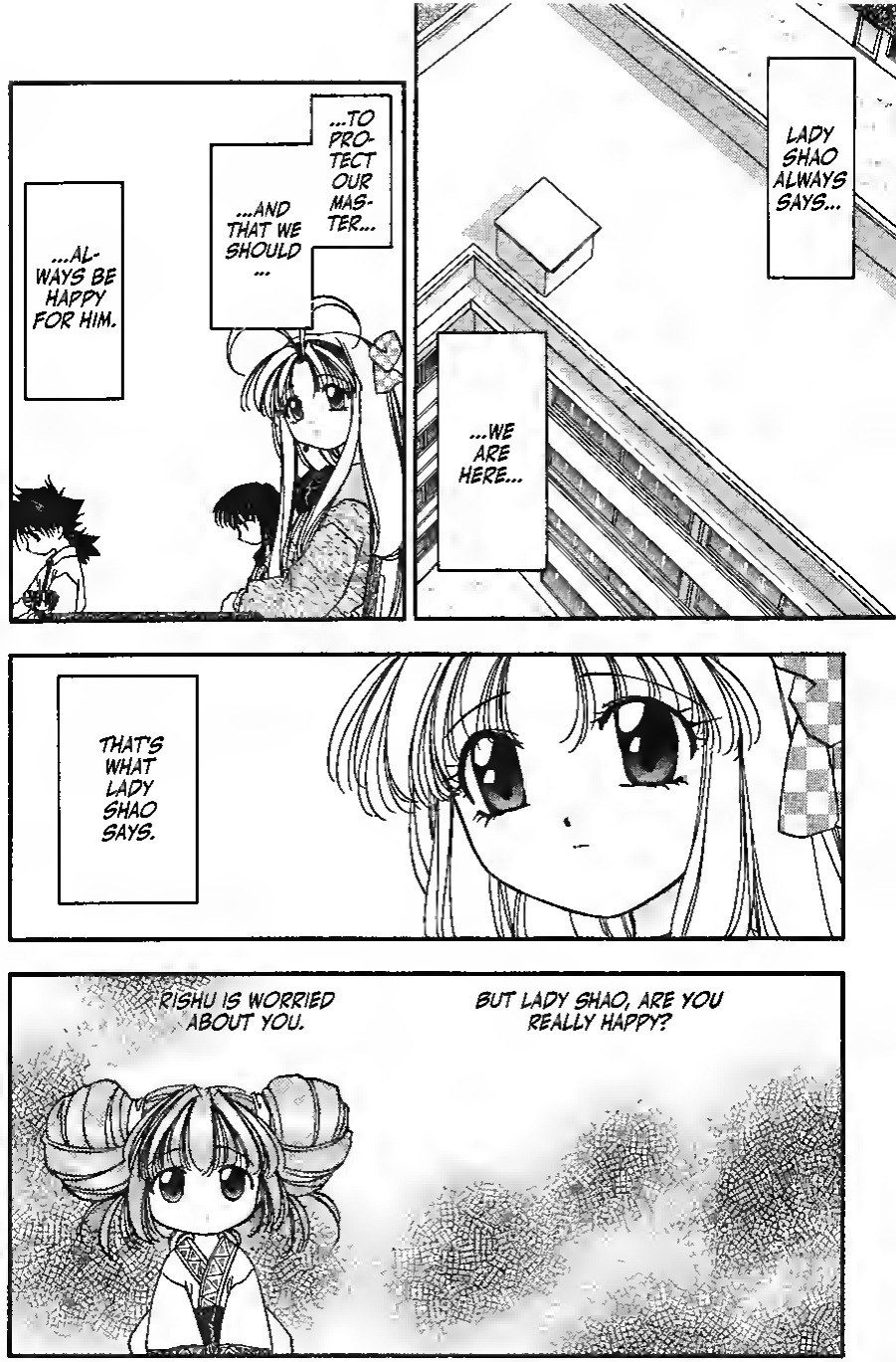
CHAPTER 29
PLEASE FEEL BETTER, LADY SHAO


LADY SHAO ALWAYS SAYS...
...WE ARE HERE...
...TO PROTECT OUR MASTER...
...AND THAT WE SHOULD ...
...ALWAYS BE HAPPY FOR HIM.
THAT'S WHAT LADY SHAO SAYS.
RISHU IS WORRIED ABOUT YOU.
BUT LADY SHAO, ARE YOU REALLY HAPPY?

WHAT'S WRONG?
DID YOU FORGET SOME-THING?
2ND YEAR CLASS 1
MY FIFTH PERIOD MATH HOME-WORK...
I LEFT IT ON MY DESK.
MATH... THAT'S MR. TABATA'S CLASS, RIGHT?
EEEK. HE SCARES ME.
JUST LEAVE IT TO RISHU!!
.....

SHE CAN DO IT.
LET'S LET RISHU HELP.
WHAT?!!

THAT'S RIGHT! RISHU WANTS TO HELP!
ARE YOU GONNA GO HOME AND GET IT FOR ME, RISHU?
MAYBE?

I THINK IT MIGHT BE TOO HEAVY FOR YOU TO CARRY BY YOURSELF.
AGREE.
WH-WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY?!

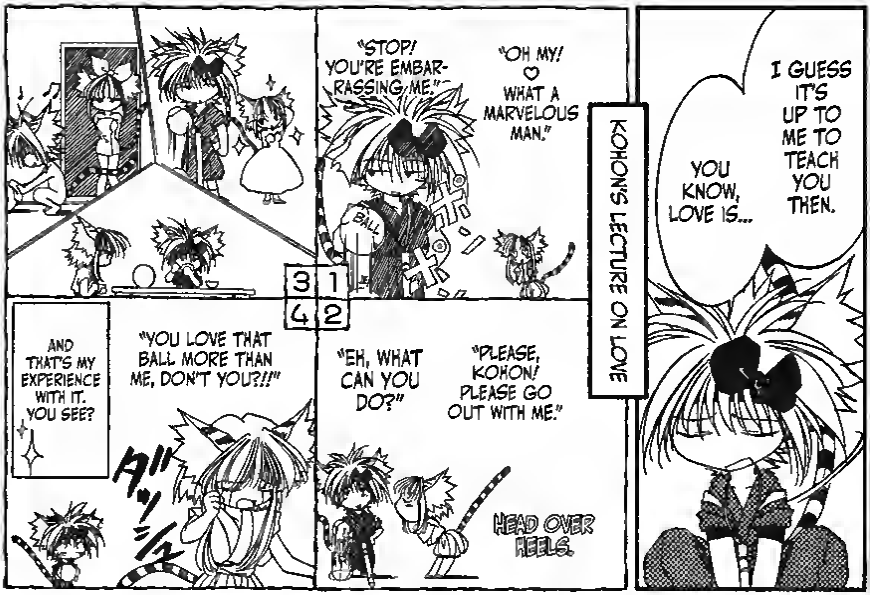
YES, MA'AM. JUST LEAVE IT TO US!!

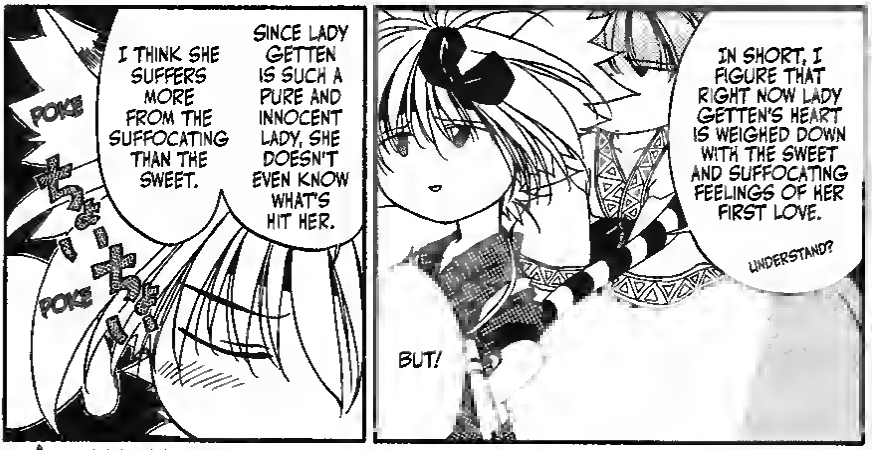
I-I'M NOT SO SURE ABOUT THIS.
WHAT'RE YOU DOING, RISHU?

KOHON. KENEN. RISHU.
SIGH... OF COURSE RISHU CAN'T GO BY HERSELF...
WHAT? ARE WE RISHU'S BABYSITTERS NOW?
I'M COUNTING ON YOU.

REEAALLY, MASTER TAA, YOU.
YOU SHOULD HAVE ASKED RUUAN. I'D HAVE YOUR HOMEWORK HERE IN A FLICK OF THE YOUTENSHIN.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO RELY ON THOSE UNTRUSTWORTHY HOSHIGAMI.
THAT'S... OKAY.
RUUUUAAAN, GET OFF ME!!
.....
NOOO

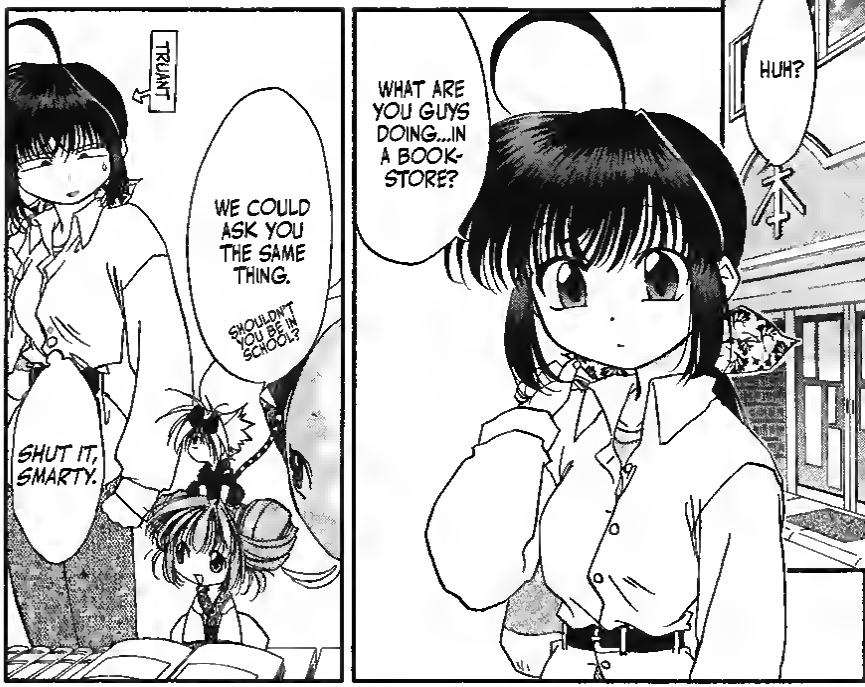
I'VE NO-TICED ...
...THE LADY GETTEN DOESN'T SEEM HAPPY LATELY.
IN MY EXPERT OPINION...
YOU DIDN'T NOTICE?
.....
DO YOU EVEN KNOW WHAT LOVE IS?
ぶんぶん
...IT'S BECAUSE OF...
...THAT THING THEY CALL LOVE.

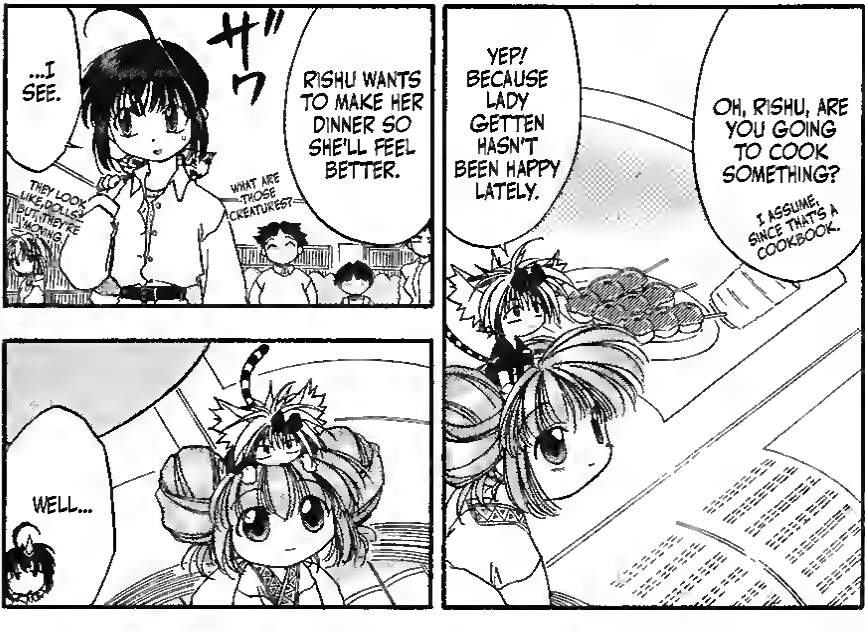

KOHON'S LECTURE ON LOVE
I GUESS IT'S UP TO ME TO TEACH YOU THEN.
YOU KNOW, LOVE IS...
"OH MY! ♡ WHAT A MARVELOUS MAN."
"STOP! YOU'RE EMBARRASSING ME."
BALL
"PLEASE, KOHON! PLEASE GO OUT WITH ME."
"EH, WHAT CAN YOU DO?"
"YOU LOVE THAT BALL MORE THAN ME, DON'T YOU?!!"
AND THAT'S MY EXPERIENCE WITH IT. YOU SEE?
HEAD OVER HEELS.
3
1
4
2


IN SHORT, I FIGURE THAT RIGHT NOW LADY GETTEN'S HEART IS WEIGHED DOWN WITH THE SWEET AND SUFFOCATING FEELINGS OF HER FIRST LOVE.
UNDERSTAND?
BUT!
SINCE LADY GETTEN IS SUCH A PURE AND INNOCENT LADY, SHE DOESN'T EVEN KNOW WHAT'S HIT HER.
I THINK SHE SUFFERS MORE FROM THE SUFFOCATING THAN THE SWEET.
POKE
POKE

† THAT'S RISHU'S FINGER!!

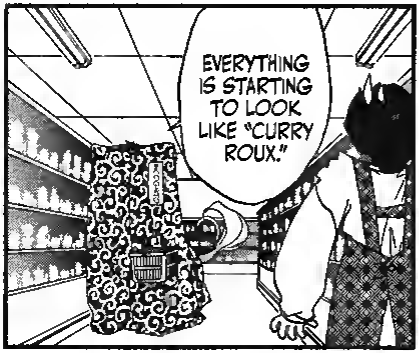
WHAT, WHAT? THE HOSHIGAMI CAN MAKE LADY GETTEN HAPPY?
IS THAT IT?
BABYSITTER AND INTERPRETER NOW.
HMM, I DON'T KNOW. IT'S NOT SOMETHING WE CAN REALLY HELP HER WITH.
HUH?
WELL, ALL RIGHT. I GUESS I'LL HELP YOU CHEER UP LADY GETTEN.
OH, BUT I THINK WE FORGOT SOMETHING.
RECESS--THREE HOURS LATER
YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT.
THEY SHOULD BE AT THE HOUSE BY NOW.
SHE'S NOT LISTENING.
ET TU, KENEN?
HERE WE GO, KENEN!!


HUH?
WHAT ARE YOU GUYS DOING...IN A BOOK-STORE?
TRUANT
WE COULD ASK YOU THE SAME THING.
SHOULDN'T YOU BE IN SCHOOL?
SHUT IT, SMARTY.

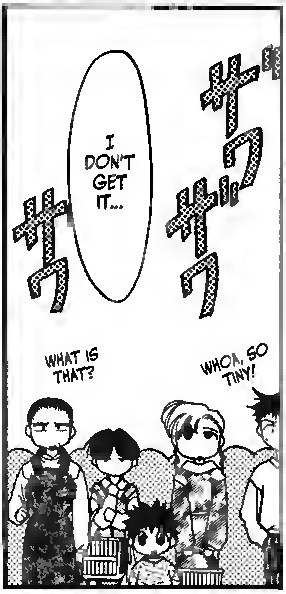

OH, RISHU, ARE YOU GOING TO COOK SOMETHING?
I ASSUME, SINCE THAT'S A COOKBOOK.
YEP! BECAUSE LADY GETTEN HASN'T BEEN HAPPY LATELY.
RISHU WANTS TO MAKE HER DINNER SO SHE'LL FEEL BETTER.
サヴ
...I SEE.
WHAT ARE THOSE CREATURES?
THEY LOOK LIKE ROLLS, BUT THEY'RE MOVING.
WELL...

IF YOU THINK IT'LL MAKE SHAO HAPPY, THEN...
...I'M ALL FOR IT!
パサッ
GOOD LUCK!!
I'LL BUY THIS BOOK FOR YOU. ♡
COOKING
50 MINUTE
YOU PROBABLY ALREADY KNOW, BUT YOU HAVE TO GIVE 'EM MONEY TO BUY STUFF.
BEFORE LUNCH BREAK
WHY AREN'T THEY BACK YET?
I DON'T KNOW. THEY'VE BEEN GONE A LONG TIME.
AND MAYBE YOU SHOULD WEAR A DISGUISE WHEN YOU GO SHOPPING.
YOU GUYS LOOK KINDA SUSPICIOUS, YOU KNOW
?

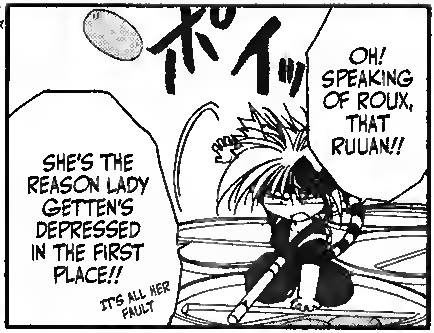
SIGN READS: SUPER MARKET MUSASHI

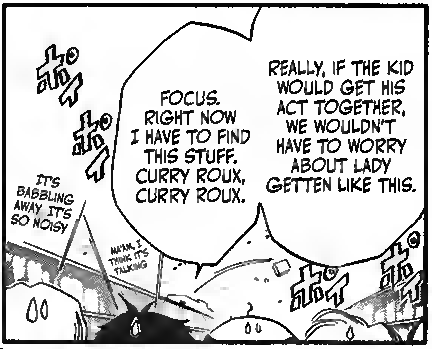


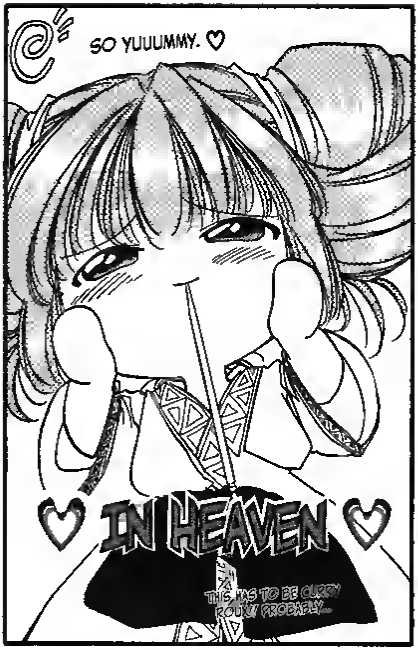
MAYBE IT'S SOMETHING SWEET.
THAT'S WHAT IT SOUNDS LIKE TO ME.
THEY CALL IT "CURRY ROUX" SO IT MUST BE SOMETHING CURLY, HUH?
HA-HA, THERE'S SOMETHING OVER THERE

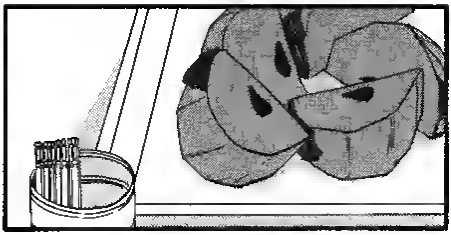

I DON'T GET IT...
WHAT IS THAT?
WHOA, SO TINY!

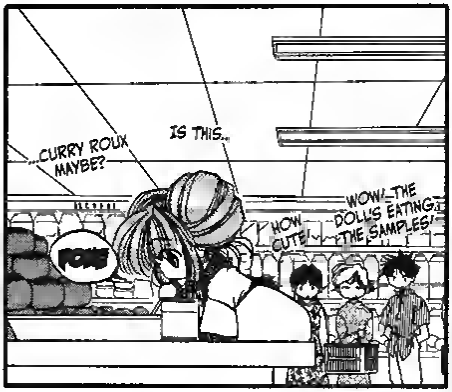
I FOUND IT!!
THIS LOOKS LIKE CURRY ROUX, DOESN'T IT?!!

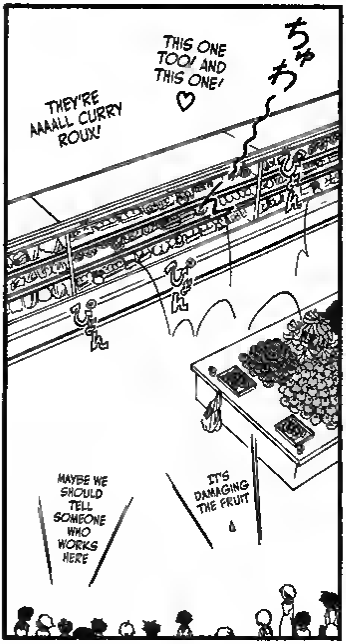

OH! SPEAKING OF ROUX, THAT RUUAN!!
SHE'S THE REASON LADY GETTEN'S DEPRESSED IN THE FIRST PLACE!!
IT'S ALL HER FAULT

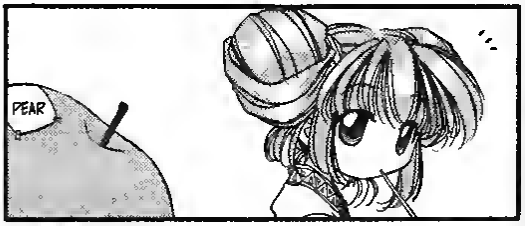

FOCUS. RIGHT NOW I HAVE TO FIND THIS STUFF. CURRY ROUX, CURRY ROUX.
REALLY, IF THE KID WOULD GET HIS ACT TOGETHER, WE WOULDN'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT LADY GETTEN LIKE THIS.
IT'S BABBLING AWAY IT'S SO NOISY
MAYBE I THINK IT'S TALKING

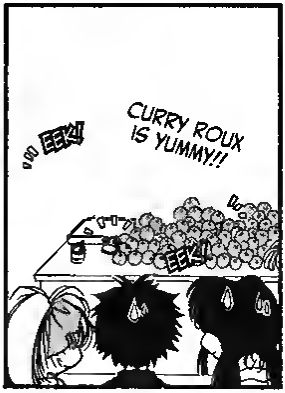

SO YUUUMMY. ♡
IN HEAVEN
THIS HAS TO BE CURRY ROUX! PROBABLY...




...CURRY ROUX MAYBE?
IS THIS..
POW!
WOW! CUTE!
WOW! THE DOLL'S EATING THE SAMPLES!

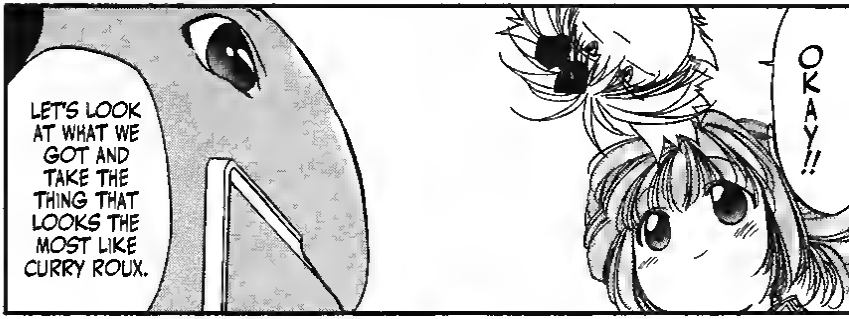

THEY'RE AAAALL CURRY ROUX!
THIS ONE TOO! AND THIS ONE! ♡
ちゃ
ちゃ
MAYBE WE SHOULD TELL SOMEONE WHO WORKS HERE
IT'S DAMAGING THE FRUIT


PEAR

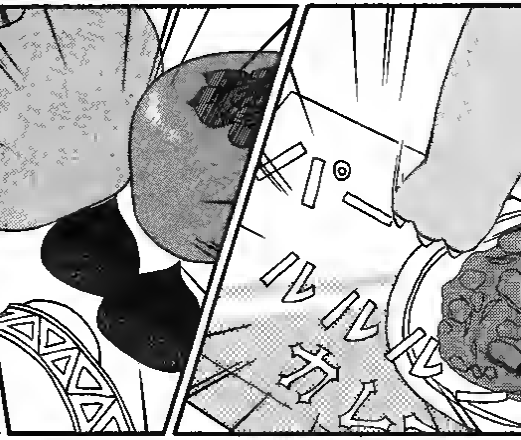

EEK!
CURRY ROUX IS YUMMY!!
EEK!

MAYBE THIS IS CURRY ROUX.
THIS ONE TOO.
かぶ
かぶ

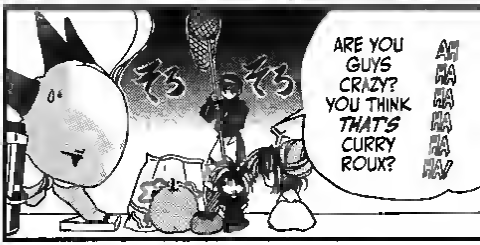
MOMMY, I WANT CURRY TODAY!!
WHAT IS THAT?! IT'S HUGE.
LOOKS LIKE KEIICHI FANGED HIS MIND
O-OKAY, GET ME THE CURRY ROUX AND COME HERE QUICKLY!!
'KAY!
まるごと
シチュー
ソース
MILD

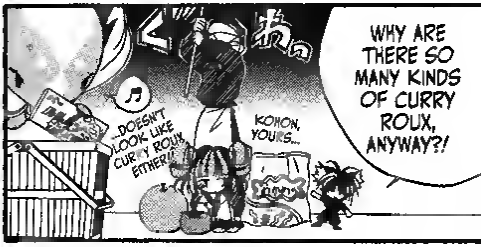


BOX READS: DOUBLE WAKAME SEAWEED



BOX READS: PAPA RUUN'S CURRY





KENEN'S PUTTING HIS IN, AS HE SHOULD.

FIVE MINUTES BEFORE LUNCH RECESS ENDS
WHAT ARE RISHU AND THEM DOING? THIS ISN'T GOOD.
I TOLD YOU. YOU SHOULD HAVE ASKED RUUAN.
BUT, MISS RUUAN, THAT'S MY SEAT...
RISHU, KOHON, KENEN...
WHAT'S HAPPENED?
HEY, WAIT!
WHOA! IT WENT THAT WAY!

WE DIDN'T DO ANY-THING!!
YES, YOU DID.
DANG IT! WHY'RE THEY FOLLOWING US?!!
!!
WAAAH!
OOH!
LOOK!!
RISHU!
LOOK UP AHEAD! IN FRONT OF US!!

WHOA!! WHAT IS IT?!
MR. IZUMO
IZUMO MIYAUCHI!!!
ERG, BUT I HATE HIM.
YO! WASSUP?
NO TIME TO EXPLAIN, JUST...
なとう

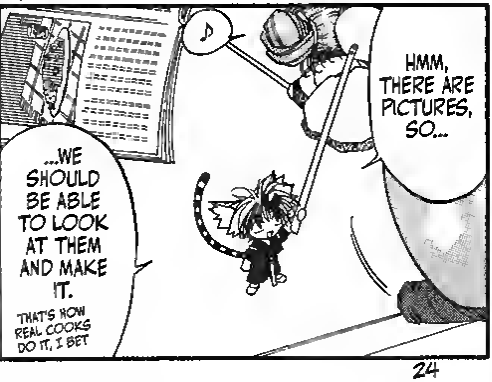
...HELP US!!
HUH?
HEEEY!!
HE'S RESPONSIBLE, SO THANKS FOR YOUR CONCERN, BUT YOU CAN LEAVE US ALONE!!
WHOOOOOOAAAAA!
EVERY ONE
JU-JU-JU-JU--
JUUUUST A MOMENT HERE, WHAT IS THIS ABOUT?!!
AT LEAST GIMME AN EXPLANATION!
SORRY! I'LL MAKE UP FOR IT LATER. I PROMISE!!
YOU'RE GOING TO PAY FOR ALL THIS!!

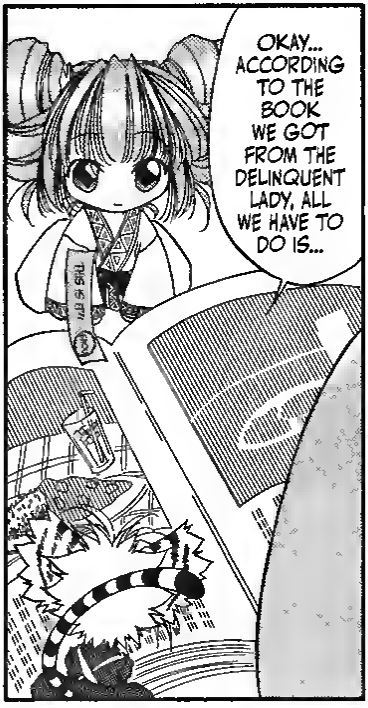
NOW FOR THE HARD PART...
こいこくん。。。
MAKING THE CURRY RICE.

WELL ...
WE GOT ALL THE INGREDIENTS.

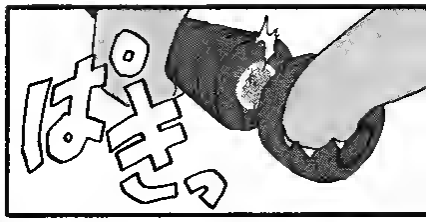
CAN'T READ IT...

↓PHOTOGRAPH

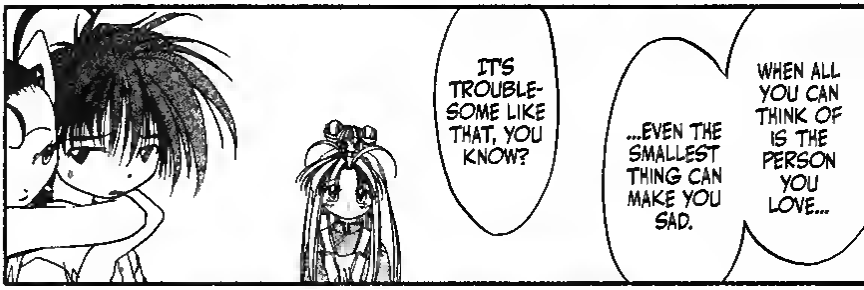

HMM, THERE ARE PICTURES, SO...
...WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO LOOK AT THEM AND MAKE IT.
THAT'S HOW REAL COOKS DO IT, I BET


OKAY... ACCORDING TO THE BOOK WE GOT FROM THE DELINQUENT LADY, ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS...

YOU MIGHT NOT UNDER-STAND ABOUT LOVE...
...BUT IT'S LIKE THIS...


ぱさっ

HEY, RISHU.
ボディッ


WHEN ALL YOU CAN THINK OF IS THE PERSON YOU LOVE...
...EVEN THE SMALLEST THING CAN MAKE YOU SAD.
IT'S TROUBLE-SOME LIKE THAT, YOU KNOW?

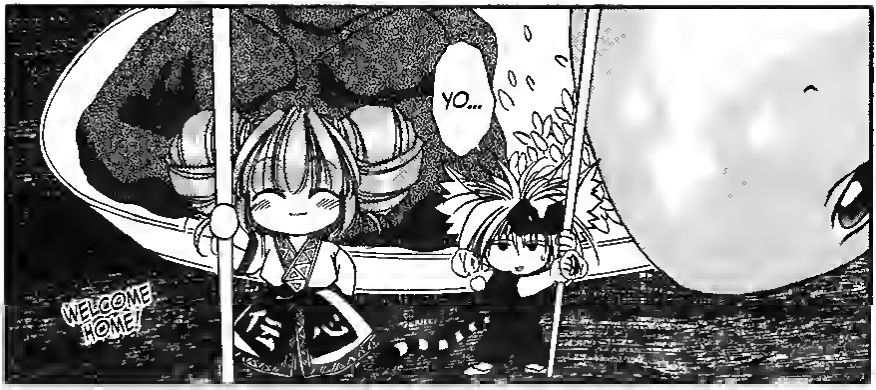
THAT'S WHY LADY GETTEN ISN'T FEELING WELL.
BUT, IF THE LADY...
...EATS OUR CURRY RICE...

...AND REMEMBERS THAT SHE HAS US...
...SHE WON'T BE SO SAD, DON'T YOU THINK?

FIFTH PERIOD MATH
HOW MANY TIMES...
NGH... RISHU
HAVE I TOLD YOU NOT TO FORGET YOUR HOMEWORK?! UNBELIEVABLE!
SORRY
POOR TASUKE...

.....

I'M HOME!
MAYBE RISHU AND THEM ARE HERE?

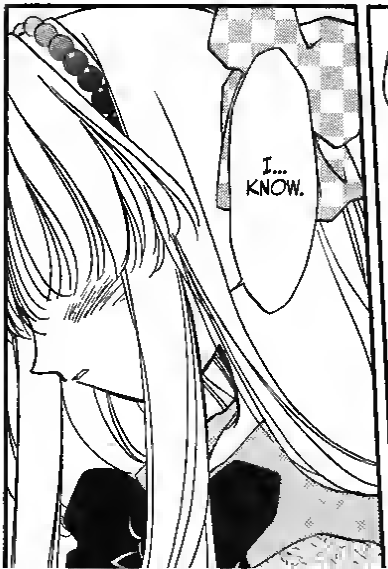

YO...
WELCOME HOME!

DOO

UH...SO... MY HOME-WORK...?
はっ
.....
RISHU, KENEN, KOHON...
OOPS
YOU LET US DOWN.

DON'T GET MAD AT THEM.
AFTER ALL, IT'S MY FAULT I FORGOT IT
UMM, IT'S OKAY, SHAO.

WHY...
...DIDN'T YOU DO WHAT WE ASKED?! I WAS COUNTING ON YOU.


I... KNOW.

BESIDES, I THINK THEY DID THIS...
...FOR YOU.

I'M SORRY.
I DON'T HAVE THE RIGHT TO SCOLD...
...RISHU OR ANY OF YOU.
I'M A BAD...
...SHUGO-GETTEN.

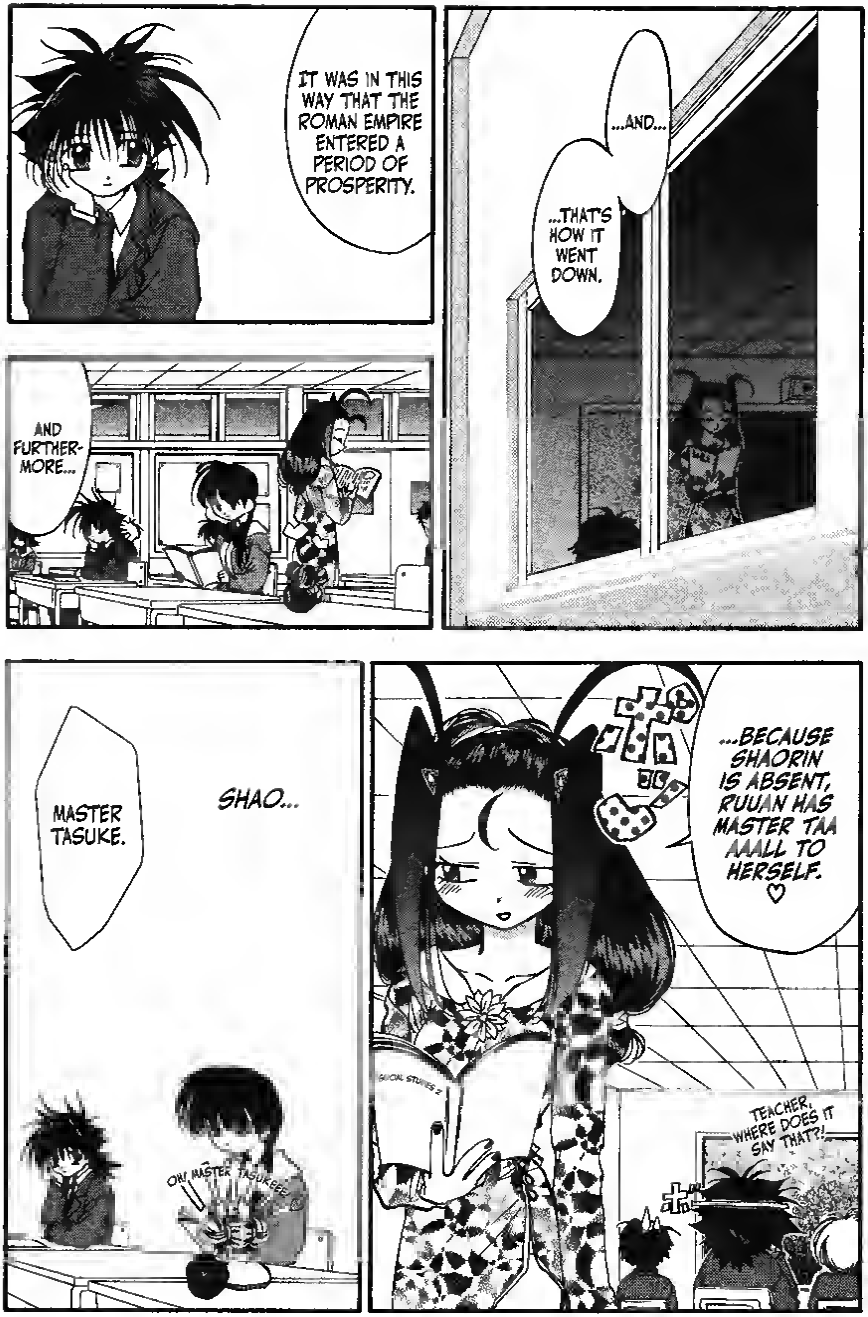
I'VE TRIED TO DEAL WITH THIS...
...STRANGE, SAD FEELING ALL BY MYSELF.
I DIDN'T EVEN REALIZE THAT...
...I MADE EVERYONE WORRY.
PLEASE FORGIVE ME.

LOOK AT THIS BEAUTIFUL MEAL.
DID THE THREE OF YOU MAKE IT ALL BY YOURSELVES?
SOMEHOW...
...I DON'T THINK ...
...I CAN BE SAD ANYMORE. ♡

BUT, UMM...
.....
LADY SHAO.
SHAO...
.....
YOU MIGHT HAVE TO BE BRAVE TO EAT THIS.
OKAY!
IF SHE CAN EAT IT, I CAN AT LEAST TRY IT!!

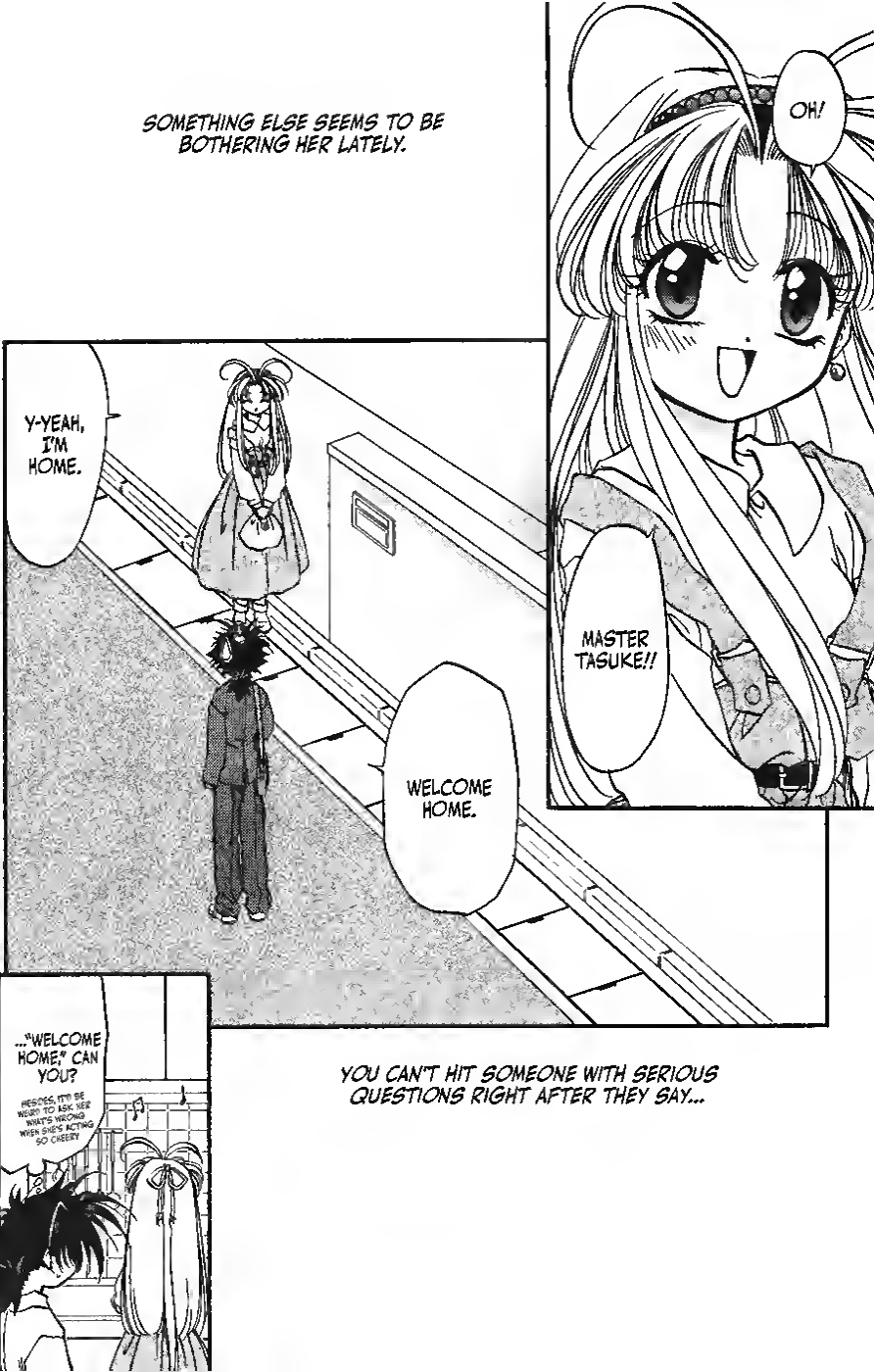
IT'S ACTUALLY .. GOOD.
EVEN IF THIS NEW AND UNKNOWN "LOVE" GETS YOU DOWN SOMETIMES...
はぐぅ!!
IT IS! ♡
IS THAT ALSO BECAUSE OF THIS... "LOVE"?
...YOU LAUGH AND SMILE MORE IN THIS TIME AND IN THIS LAND...
...THAN YOU EVER HAVE BEFORE.
IT'S DELICIOUS!
I DON'T SEE ANY CURRY.
WOULD YOU LIKE SOME CURRY TOO?
POOR RUUAN ...
I'M HOME.
UUUGH THE TEACHER'S MEETING RAN LATE

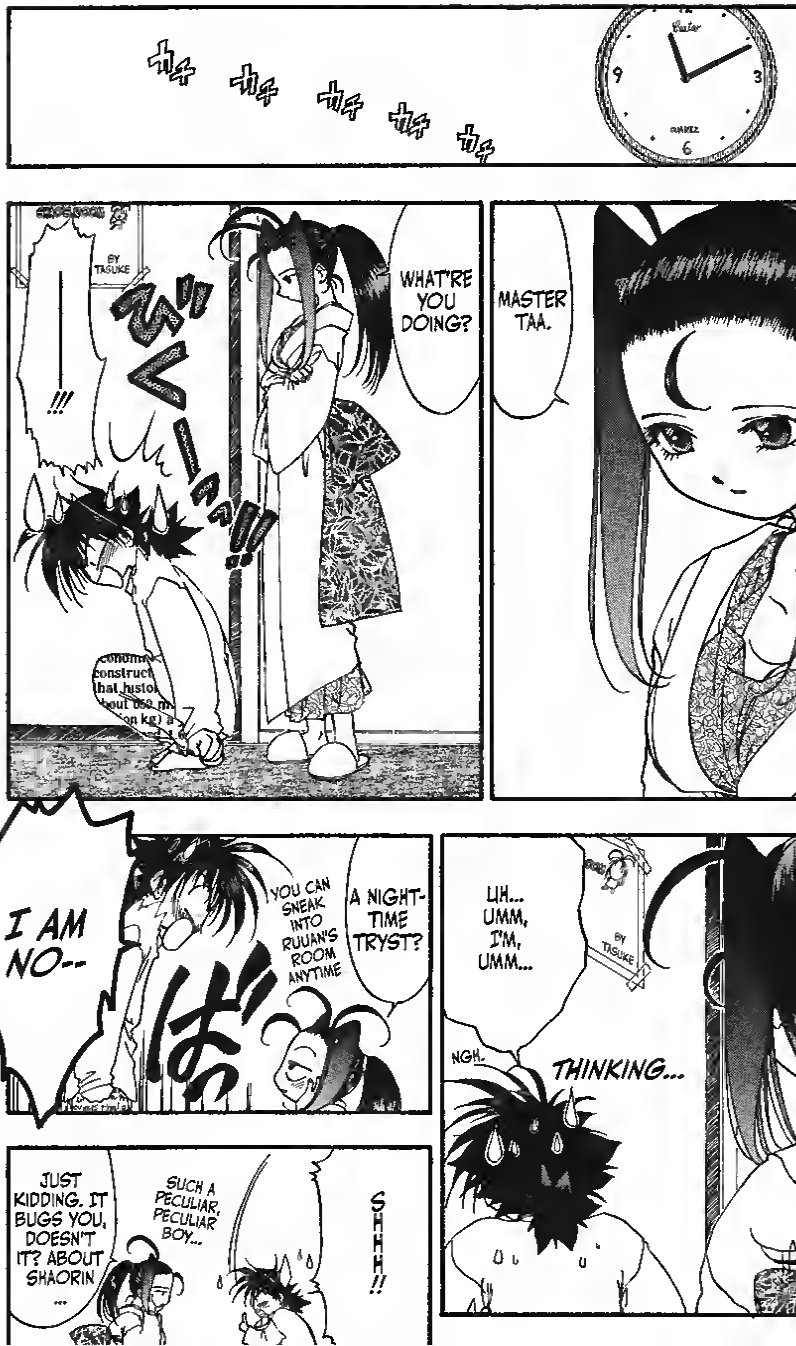
CHAPTER 30
OPERATION: HELP SHAO


IT WAS IN THIS WAY THAT THE ROMAN EMPIRE ENTERED A PERIOD OF PROSPERITY.
...AND...
...THAT'S HOW IT WENT DOWN.
AND FURTHER-MORE...
MASTER TASUKE.
SHAO...
OH, MASTER TASUKE!!
...BECAUSE SHAORIN IS ABSENT, RUUAN HAS MASTER TAA AAALL TO HERSELF. ♡
TEACHER, WHERE DOES IT SAY THAT?!

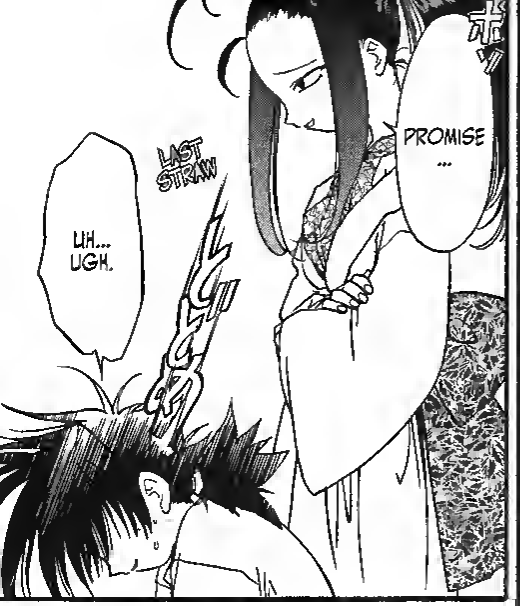
I'M SORRY, MASTER TASUKE.
I'M NOT GOING TO ATTEND SCHOOL FOR A WHILE.
HUH?
UMM, WELL...
I MEAN, JUST KINDA SORTA...
.....
WHY... NOT?
...WHY WON'T SHE TELL ME?
IF SOMETHING HAPPENED...
SHAO CAN'T "JUST KINDA SORTA" NOT GO TO SCHOOL.

ガラ
TASUKE, LET'S WALK HOME TOGETHER!
MASTER TAA, LET'S GO HOME! ♡
...SOMETHING SHE CAN'T TELL ME?
IS IT...
NUH UH! WHY?!!
TASUKE ALREADY LEFT...
.....
MAYBE HE WANTS TO ENJOY THE EVENING BY HIMSELF. ♪


SOMETHING ELSE SEEMS TO BE BOTHERING HER LATELY.
OH!
MASTER TASUKE!!
Y-YEAH, I'M HOME.
WELCOME HOME.
...WELCOME HOME," CAN YOU?
HEROES, IT'D BE WEIRD TO ASK HER WHAT'S WRONG WHEN SHE'S ACTING SO CHEERY
YOU CAN'T HIT SOMEONE WITH SERIOUS QUESTIONS RIGHT AFTER THEY SAY...

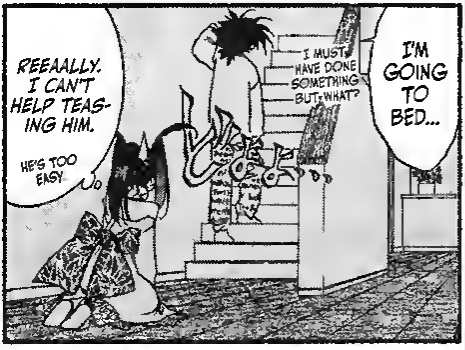

MASTER TAA.
WHAT'RE YOU DOING?
BY TASUKE
!!!
I AM NO--
A NIGHT-TIME TRYST?
YOU CAN SNEAK INTO RUUAN'S ROOM ANYTIME
LIH... UMM, I'M, UMM...
BY TASUKE
NGH.
THINKING...
SHHH!!
SUCH A PECULIAR, PECULIAR BOY...
JUST KIDDING. IT BUGS YOU, DOESN'T IT? ABOUT SHAORIN ...

RISHU, WHAT WAS THAT NOISE?
?
?
ドキッ
HMM?
IT WAS PROBABLY NOTHING.
ドンッ
WE NEED TO GET LOTS OF SLEEP TONIGHT.
IT'D BE TERRIBLE IF WE FELL ASLEEP TOMORROW.
THAT'S RIGHT, RISHU.
YOU CAN'T TELL MASTER TASUKE...
...WHAT I'M DOING, OKAY?
...PROM-ISE.

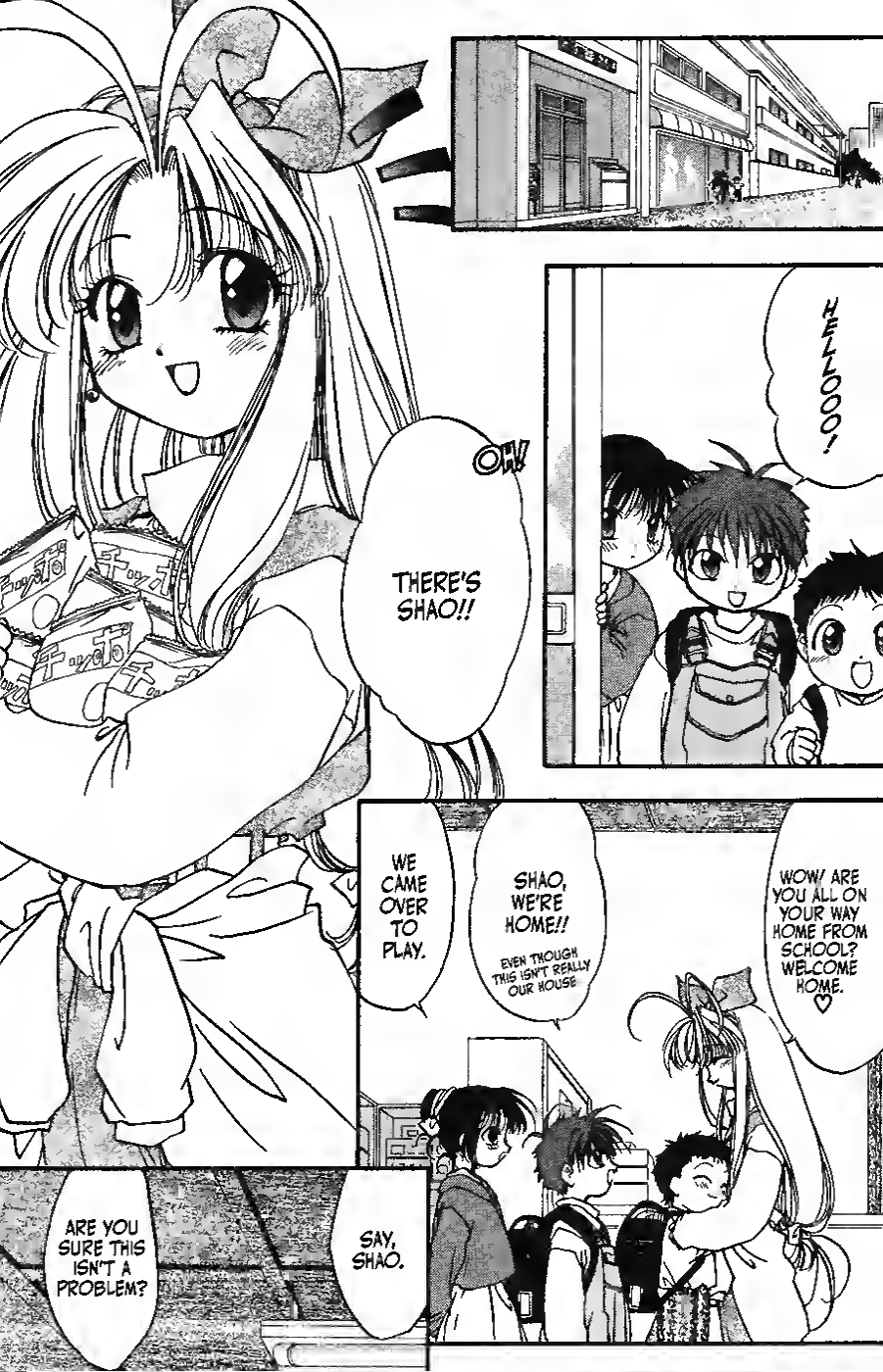

PROMISE ...
LAST STRAW
UH... UGH.

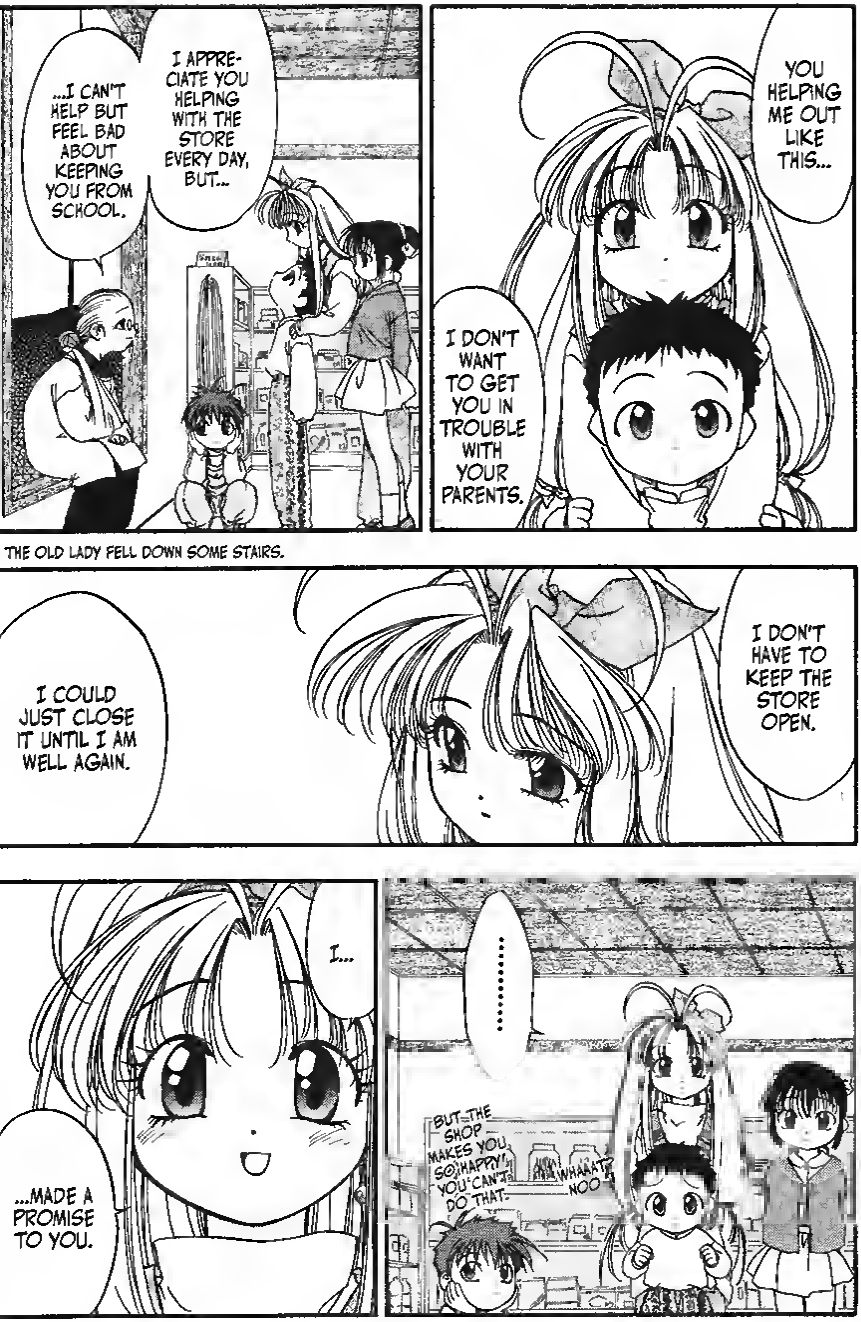
YOU CAN'T.
YOU CAN'T.
CAN'T.
CAN'T.
CAN'T.
ECHO

KEEPING SECRETS FROM MASTER TAA, IS SHE?
MAYBE SHE DOESN'T LIKE YOU.
SHUT UP, RUUAN !!
STUPID!!


I'M GOING TO BED...
I MUST HAVE DONE SOMETHING BUT WHAT?
REEAALLY. I CAN'T HELP TEASING HIM.
HE'S TOO EASY.

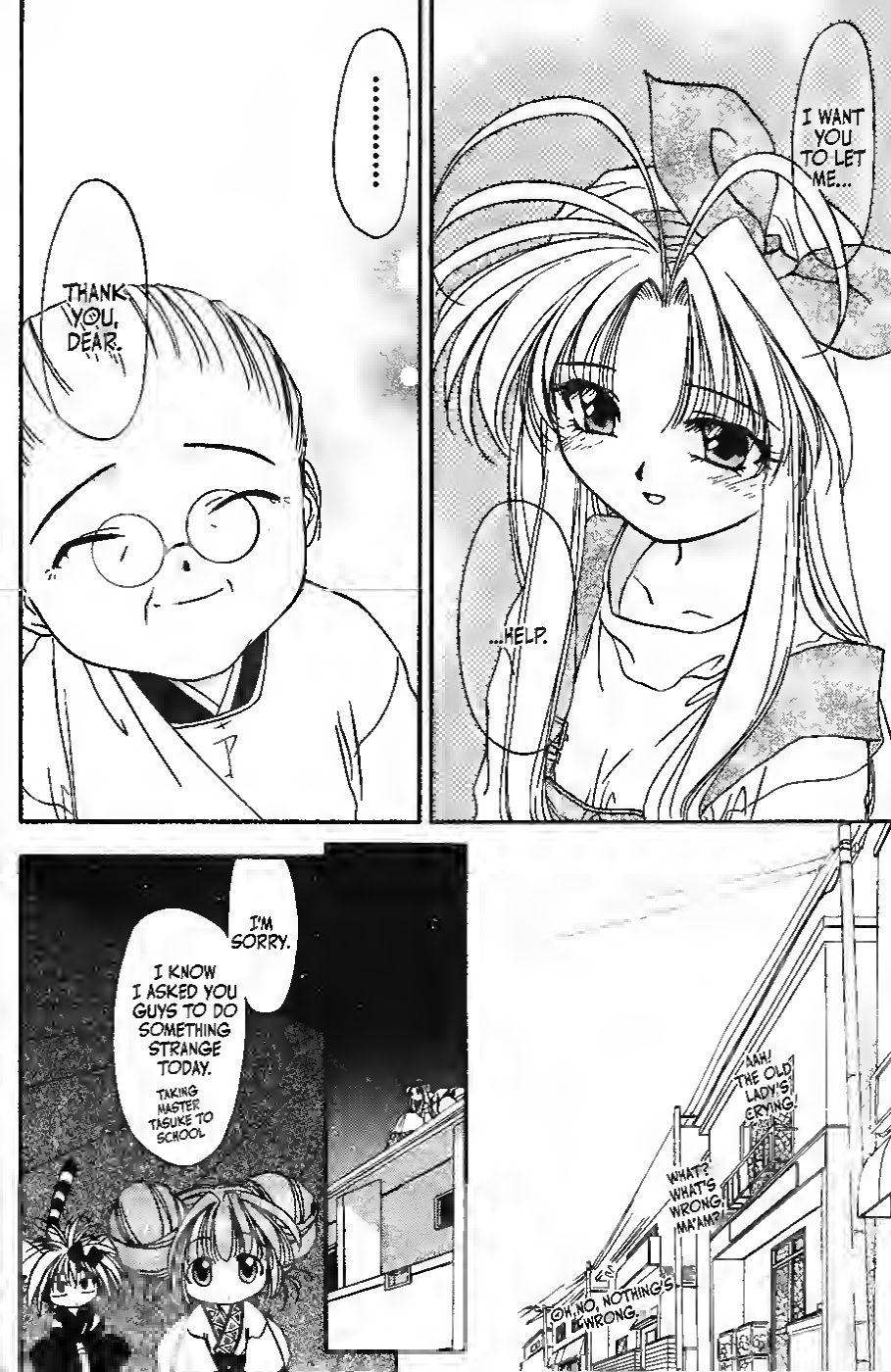
IF SHAO WON'T TELL ME, THEN I'LL FIND OUT FOR MYSELF WHAT SHE'S UP TO!!
HE HASN'T SLEPT AND IS ABOUT TO SNAP
HUH?
WH-WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!! YOU GUYS NEVER TAKE ME TO SCHOOL OR PICK ME UP!!
I WILL FIGURE OUT SHAO'S SECRET!
GO, KENEN!!
TIME FOR YOU TO GO TO SCHOOL, YOUNG MASTER.
Y-Y-Y--
YOUNG MASTER?!!
CREEPY.
GUYS,
I'M COUNTING ON YOU TO TAKE CARE OF MASTER TASUKE.

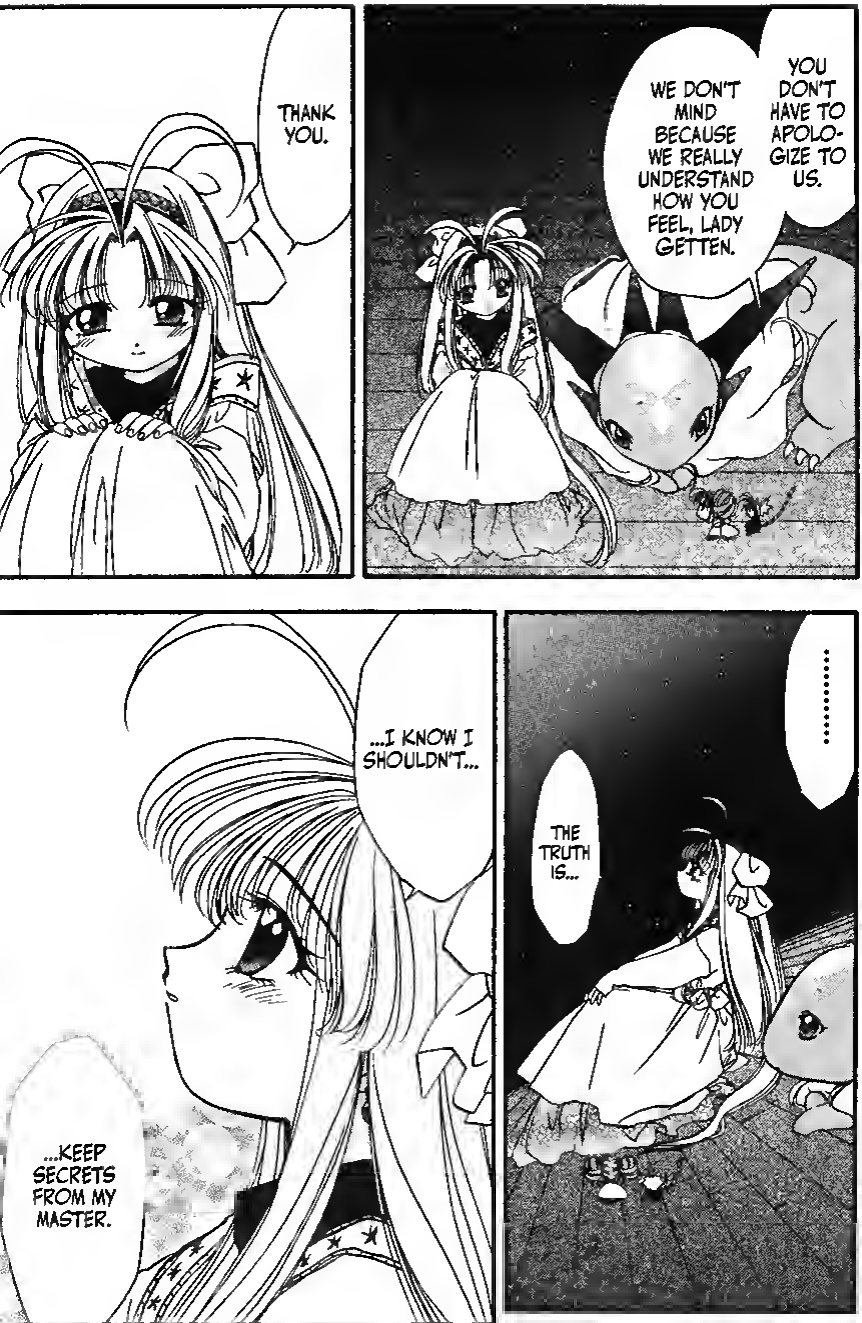

HELLOOO!
OH!
THERE'S SHAO!!
WE CAME OVER TO PLAY.
SHAO, WE'RE HOME!!
EVEN THOUGH THIS ISN'T REALLY OUR HOUSE
WOW! ARE YOU ALL ON YOUR WAY HOME FROM SCHOOL? WELCOME HOME.
SAY, SHAO.
ARE YOU SURE THIS ISN'T A PROBLEM?


...I CAN'T HELP BUT FEEL BAD ABOUT KEEPING YOU FROM SCHOOL.
I APPRECIATE YOU HELPING WITH THE STORE EVERY DAY, BUT...
I DON'T WANT TO GET YOU IN TROUBLE WITH YOUR PARENTS.
YOU HELPING ME OUT LIKE THIS...
THE OLD LADY FELL DOWN SOME STAIRS.
I COULD JUST CLOSE IT UNTIL I AM WELL AGAIN.
I DON'T HAVE TO KEEP THE STORE OPEN.
...MADE A PROMISE TO YOU.
I...
.....
BUT THE SHOP MAKES YOU SO HAPPY! YOU CAN'T DO THAT.
WHAAAT? NOO

YOU OUGHT TO FIND A BED TO SLEEP IN.
IT MUST NOT BE COMFORT-ABLE SLEEPING OUT HERE.
WHEN THE THREE OF US, MISS SHOUKO, KOKA AND I, CAME HERE AND...
...I TALKED TO YOU...
MA'AM.
WHY, THAT'D BE WONDERFUL!
WOULD IT BE ALL RIGHT IF I HELPED YOU?
MA'AM.
THANK YOU.
I WILL VISIT YOU AGAIN, MA'AM.
LET'S GO, AIRHEAD!!

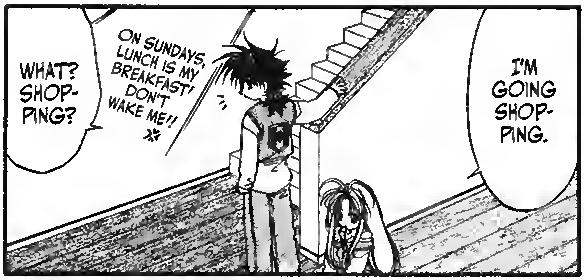
BESIDES THAT...
...EVERY-ONE...
KOTOU CANDY SHOP
...LOVES THIS CANDY STORE.
YOU HAVE TO STAY OPEN EVERY DAY ...
...FOR THEIR SAKES TOO.
THAT'S WHY...
...I WANT TO BE HERE.


I WANT YOU TO LET ME...
...HELP.
.....
THANK YOU, DEAR.
I'M SORRY.
I KNOW I ASKED YOU GUYS TO DO SOMETHING STRANGE TODAY.
TAKING MASTER TASUKE TO SCHOOL
AAH! THE OLD LADY'S CRYING!
WHAT? WHAT'S WRONG, MA'AM?
OH, NO, NOTHING'S WRONG.

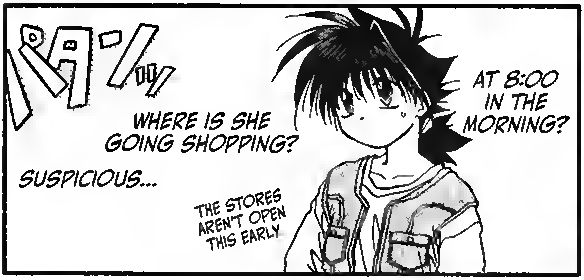

THANK YOU.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO APOLO-GIZE TO US.
WE DON'T MIND BECAUSE WE REALLY UNDERSTAND HOW YOU FEEL, LADY GETTEN.
.....
THE TRUTH IS...
...I KNOW I SHOULDN'T...
...KEEP SECRETS FROM MY MASTER.

AFTER ALL...
...IF MASTER TASUKE KNEW I WAS SERVING SOMEONE ELSE...
...HE WOULD PROBABLY...
IT'S NEVER BEEN...
...LIKE THIS BEFORE.
...I'VE EVER HID ANYTHING FROM MY MASTER.
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME...
BUT ...
...I CAN'T LET HIM FIND OUT, NO MATTER WHAT.

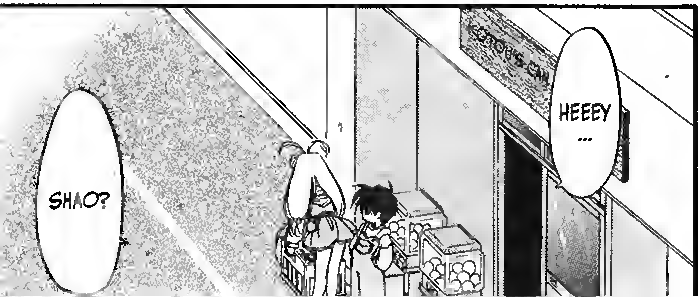
たっ たっ
OKAY!!
TODAY, NOTHING WILL STOP ME FROM FINDING OUT WHAT SHE'S UP TO!!
HMM?
GWEE!
WHAT ABOUT SCHOOL...?
はっ
KOKA, WHAT...?
WHAAAAA?!!
B-B-BIG MOOULTH?!
GWEE!
くぅーん
EEEK! TASUKE?!!
THAT WASN'T NICE.
PTU!

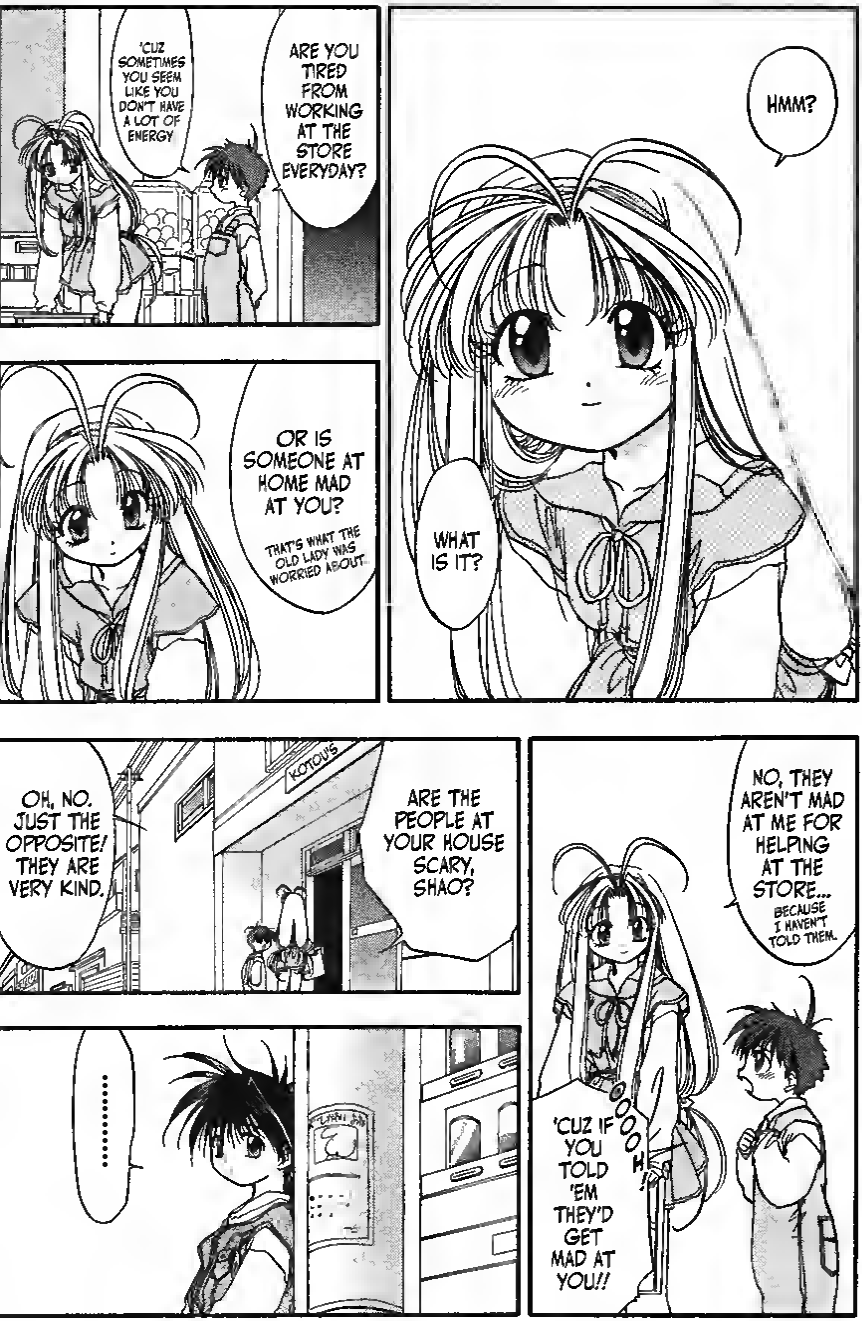

WHAT? SHOP-PING?
ON SUNDAYS, LUNCH IS MY BREAKFAST! DON'T WAKE ME!!
I'M GOING SHOP-PING.

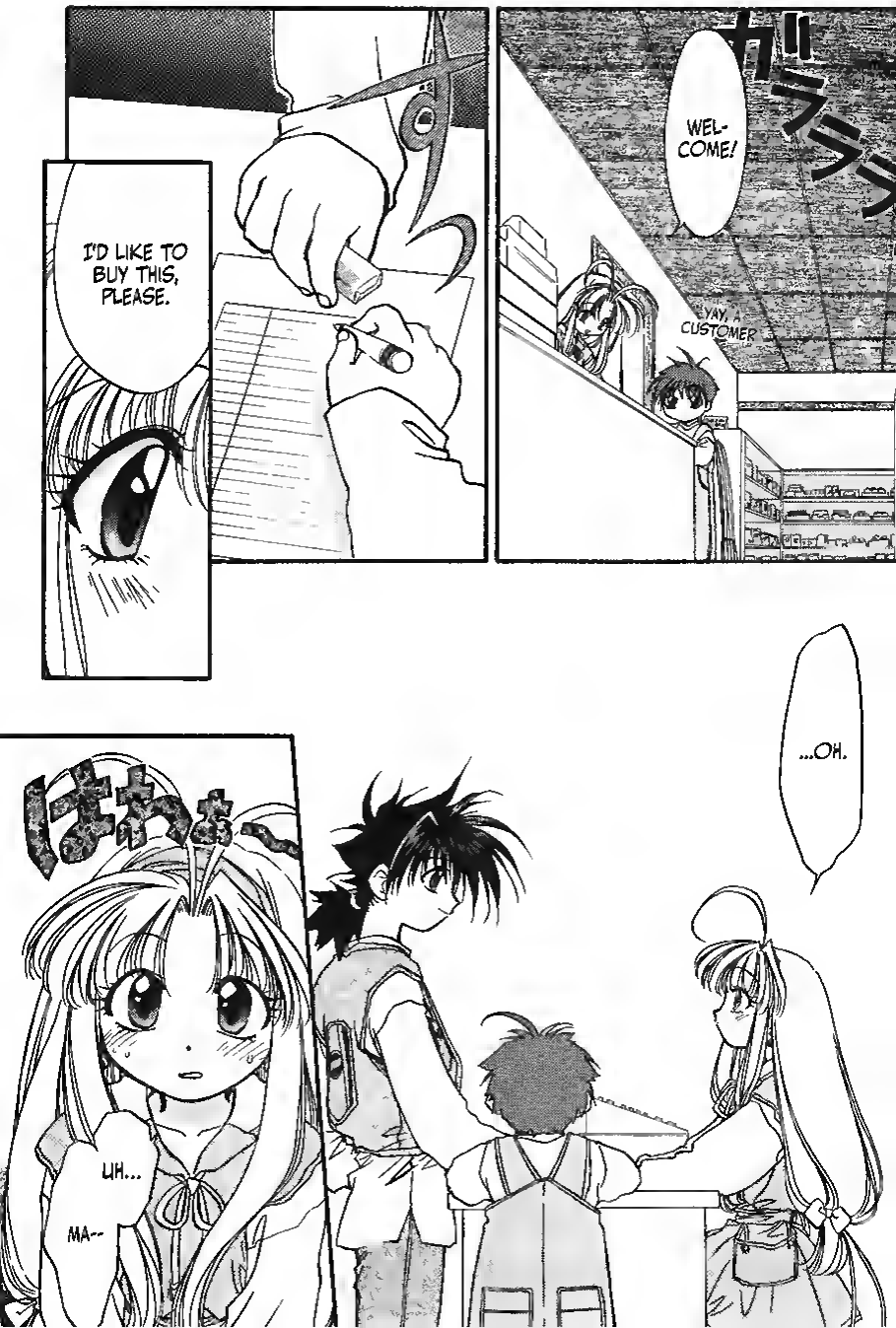
SUNDAY
HEEY, RUUAN! I'M GOING TO THROW YOUR BREAKFAST AWAY IF YOU DON'T GET DOWN HERE!!

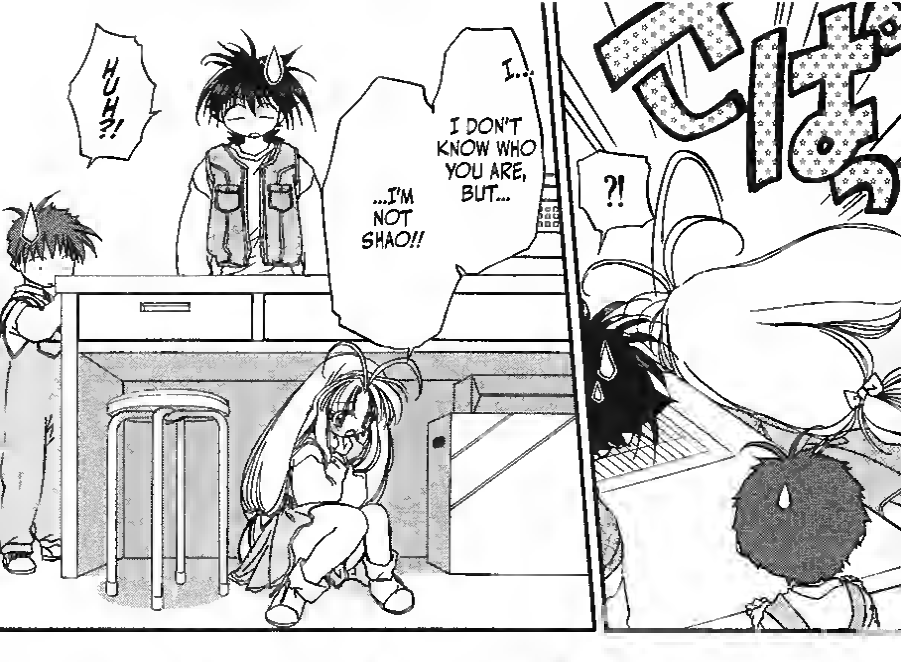

ハテ?
WHERE IS SHE GOING SHOPPING?
AT 8:00 IN THE MORNING?
SUSPICIOUS...
THE STORES AREN'T OPEN THIS EARLY

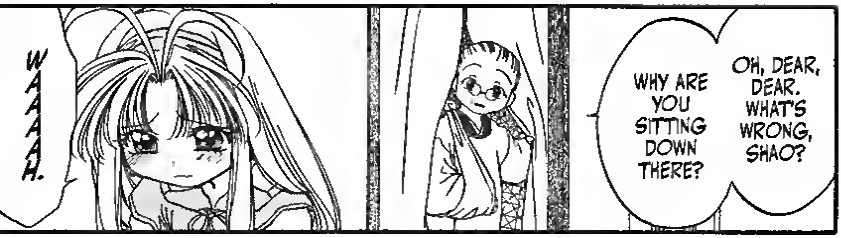
YAWN GAWL
タッタッ

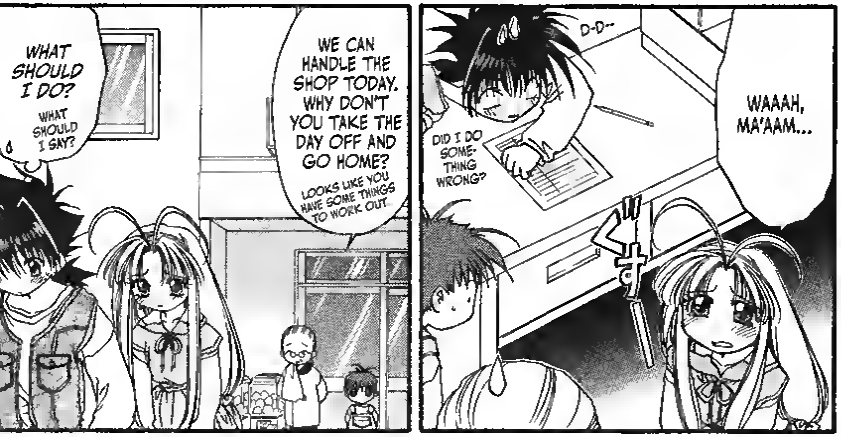

HEEEY ...
SHAO?


ARE YOU TIRED FROM WORKING AT THE STORE EVERYDAY?
'CUZ SOMETIMES YOU SEEM LIKE YOU DON'T HAVE A LOT OF ENERGY
HMM?
WHAT IS IT?
OR IS SOMEONE AT HOME MAD AT YOU?
THAT'S WHAT THE OLD LADY WAS WORRIED ABOUT
ARE THE PEOPLE AT YOUR HOUSE SCARY, SHAO?
KOTOU'S
OH, NO. JUST THE OPPOSITE! THEY ARE VERY KIND.
NO, THEY AREN'T MAD AT ME FOR HELPING AT THE STORE...
BECAUSE I HAVEN'T TOLD THEM.
OOOH!
'CUZ IF YOU TOLD 'EM THEY'D GET MAD AT YOU!!
.....

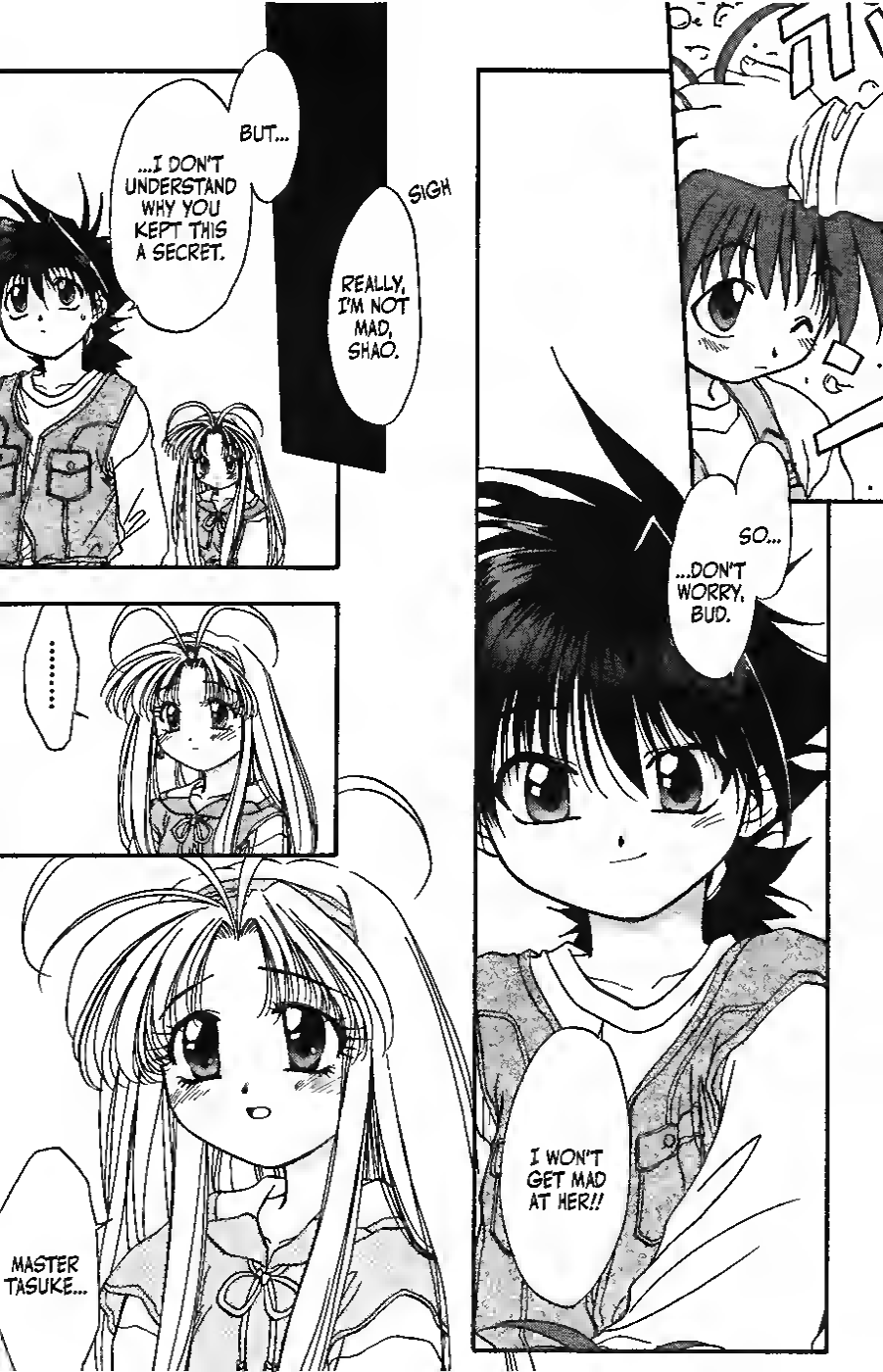

WEL-COME!
YAY, A CUSTOMER
I'D LIKE TO BUY THIS, PLEASE.
...OH.
UH...
MA--


HUH?!
I...
I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE, BUT...
...I'M NOT SHAO!!
?!


WAAAAH.
WHY ARE YOU SITTING DOWN THERE?
OH, DEAR, DEAR. WHAT'S WRONG, SHAO?


WHAT SHOULD I DO?
WHAT SHOULD I SAY?
WE CAN HANDLE THE SHOP TODAY. WHY DON'T YOU TAKE THE DAY OFF AND GO HOME?
LOOKS LIKE YOU HAVE SOME THINGS TO WORK OUT
D-D--
DID I DO SOME-THING WRONG?
WAAAH, MA'AAM...

IF YOU MAKE SHAO SAD...
...I'LL HURT YOU!!
TUG
I LIKE HER A LOT...
...TOO.
.....
OH, DO YOU LIKE SHAO?
YEAH!!
I LIKE HER A LOT.

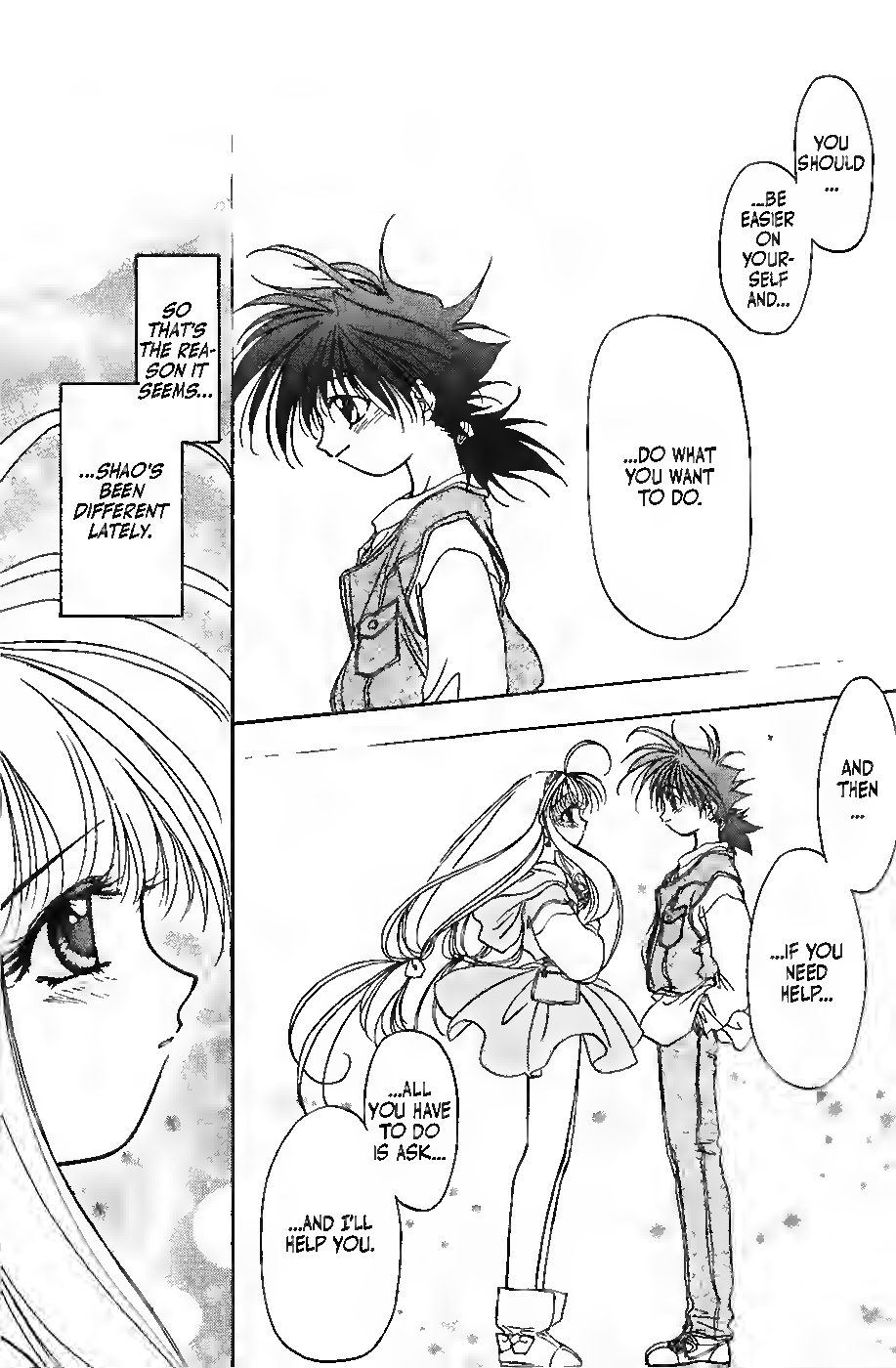

I WON'T GET MAD AT HER!!
SO...
...DON'T WORRY, BUD.
SIGH
REALLY, I'M NOT MAD, SHAO.
BUT...
...I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY YOU KEPT THIS A SECRET.
.....
MASTER TASUKE...

PLEASE...
...DON'T HATE ME FOR HELPING THE OLD LADY WITH HER STORE!!
WHA...?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I...
...WORKED FOR SOMEONE WHO ISN'T MY MASTER.
SO I THOUGHT...
...IF I TOLD YOU...
I THOUGHT YOU'D HATE ME.

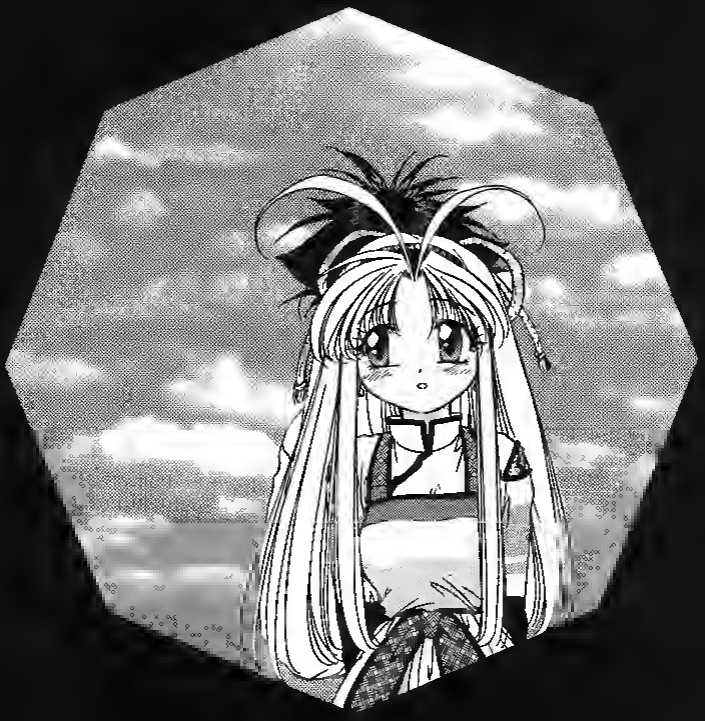
I...
.....
...HEARD THAT THE OLD LADY GOT HURT AND...
...I JUST COULDN'T LEAVE HER ALONE.
BUT...
...I DIDN'T WANT TO TELL YOU AND...
...MAKE YOU HATE ME.
SO...
...UMM...

MASTER TASUKE.
I'M SORRY ...
...FOR BEING SO SELFISH.
PLEASE...
...DON'T BE MAD AT ME.

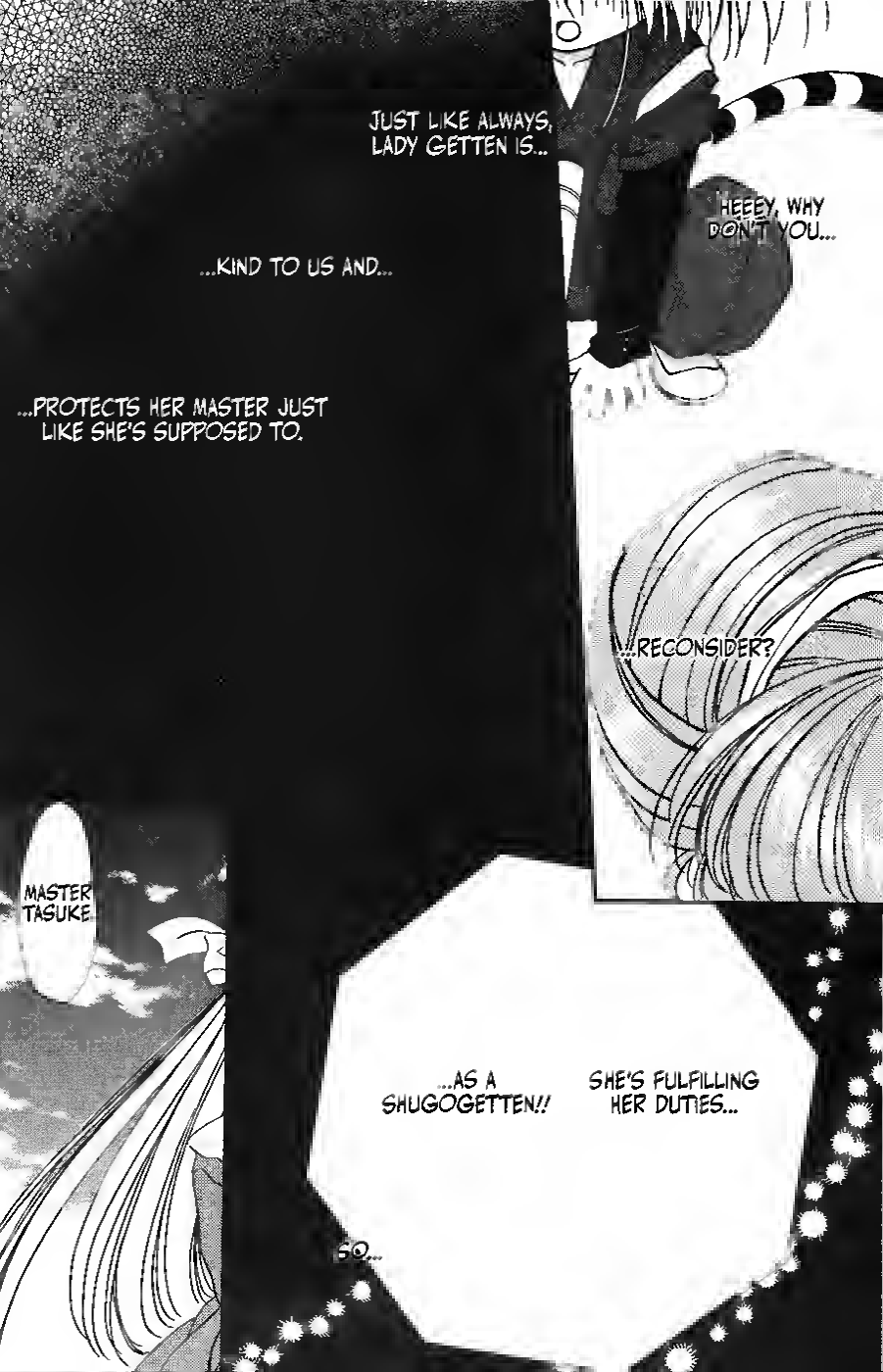
FOR SHAO...
HEY...
...SHAO.
...BEING A SHUGO-GETTEN...
...DEFINES EVERY-THING SHE DOES.
SHE JUST ACCEPTS IT AS FACT.
I WOULD NEVER HATE YOU...
...OVER SOMETHING LIKE THAT.


YOU SHOULD ...
...BE EASIER ON YOURSELF AND...
...DO WHAT YOU WANT TO DO.
SO THAT'S THE REASON IT SEEMS...
...SHAO'S BEEN DIFFERENT LATELY.
AND THEN ...
...IF YOU NEED HELP...
...ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS ASK...
...AND I'LL HELP YOU.

A FEW DAYS LATER
MISS SHAORIN.
DID THE OLD LADY FROM THE CANDY STORE GET BETTER?
YES
.....
THAT OLD LADY COMES TO OUR SHRINE A LOT.
H--
HOW DO YOU GUYS KNOW ABOUT THAT?!!
I SAID NOTHING!
BECAUSE THE CANDY SHOP'S ON MY WAY TO SCHOOL.
YOU PITIFUL, DIDN'T KNOW? ISN'T HE?
...SOMETHING THAT I...
AND IT WAS...
OKAY.
...AM PROUD OF HER FOR DOING.

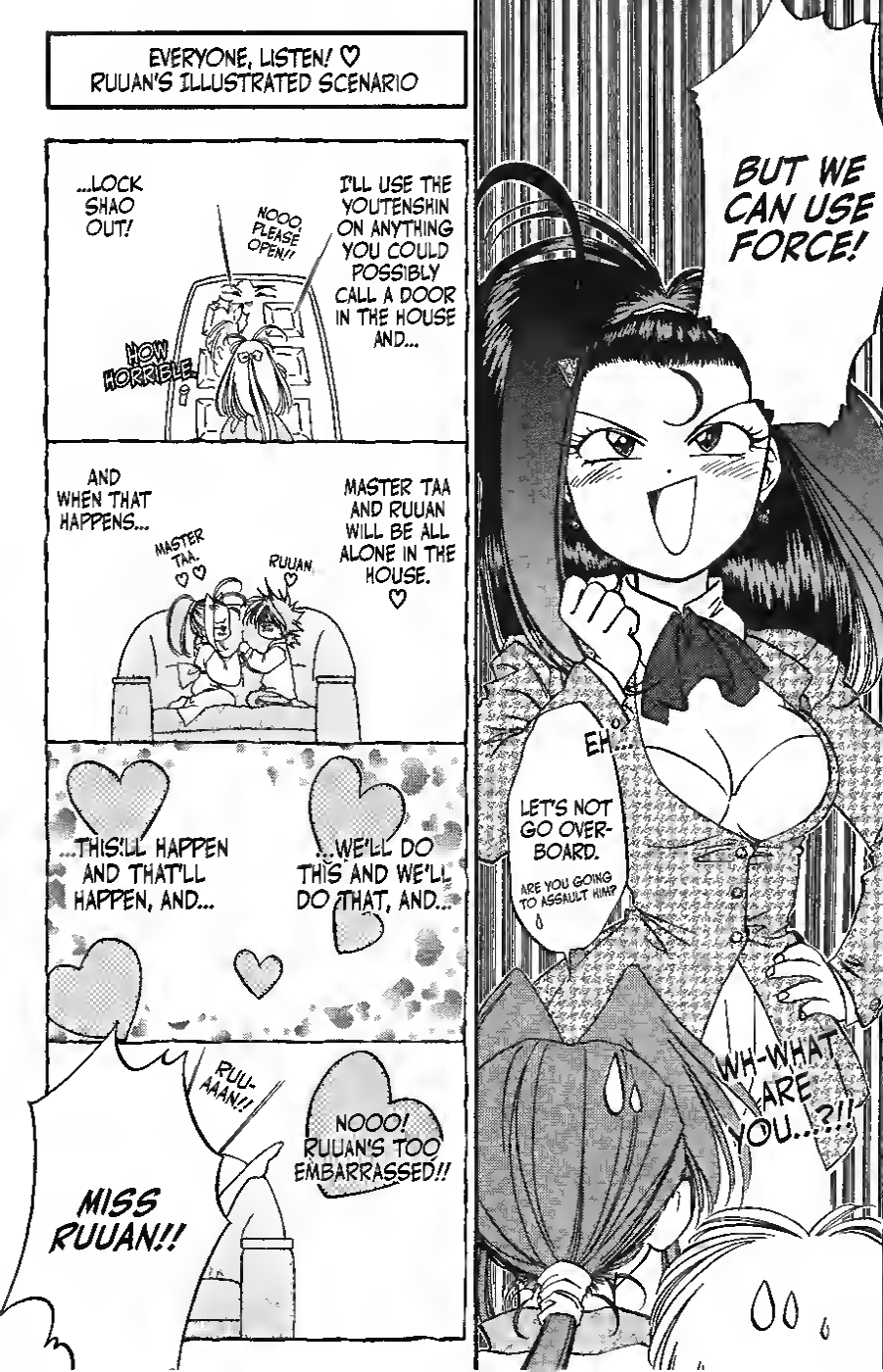


CHAPTER 31
FAREWELL, SHUGOGETTEN (PART ONE)

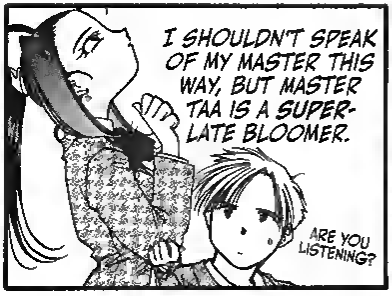

JUST LIKE ALWAYS, LADY GETTEN IS...
...KIND TO US AND...
...PROTECTS HER MASTER JUST LIKE SHE'S SUPPOSED TO.
HEEEY, WHY DON'T YOU...
!?RECONSIDER?
MASTER TASUKE
SHE'S FULFILLING HER DUTIES...
...AS A SHUGOGETTEN!!
SO...

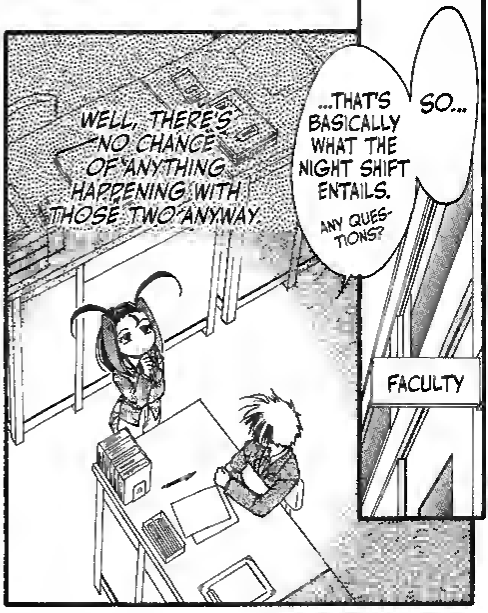
HMM?
YOU HAVE A GRAIN OF RICE...
ON YOUR CHEEK.
HUH?
TH--
THANKS ...
.....
SIGH.

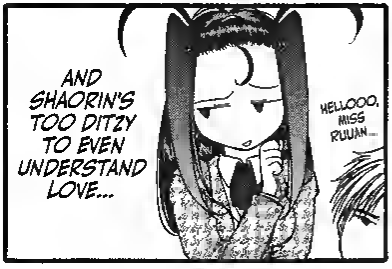
ぼそ
...THOSE TWO HAVE BECOME AWFULLY CLOSE SINCE THEY WENT TO THE BEACH WITH YOU.
COME TO THINK OF IT...
UGH!
IT'S PAINFUL TO WATCH...
HEY!! WHY'D YOU SHUT IT, STUPID?!!
WHAT IF SOMETHING WORSE HAPPENS?!
WHAT WAS THAT ABOUT?!!
THAT'S MYYY SEAT
HA...
WELL, WHAT'S PAST IS PAST...
THAT'S RIGHT!
THAT'S RIGHT! IT IS YOUR FAULT, TAKASHI!
BLAME ME, IT'S ALL MY FAULT!
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA!
WE CAN'T CHANGE WHAT'S HAPPENED.

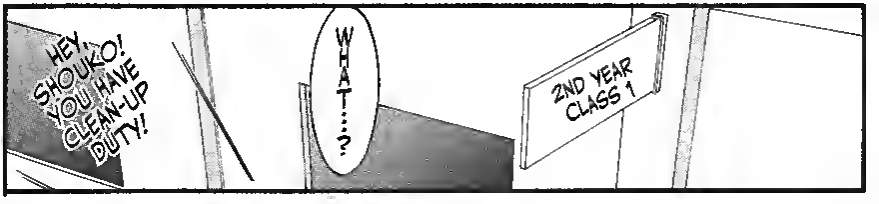

EVERYONE, LISTEN! ♡
RUUAN'S ILLUSTRATED SCENARIO
...LOCK SHAO OUT!
NOOO, PLEASE OPEN!!
I'LL USE THE YOUTENSHIN ON ANYTHING YOU COULD POSSIBLY CALL A DOOR IN THE HOUSE AND...
HOW HORRIBLE!
AND WHEN THAT HAPPENS...
MASTER TAA
RUUAN
MASTER TAA AND RUUAN WILL BE ALL ALONE IN THE HOUSE. ♡
...THIS'LL HAPPEN AND THAT'LL HAPPEN, AND...
...WE'LL DO THIS AND WE'LL DO THAT, AND...
RUU-AAAN!!
NOOO! RUUAN'S TOO EMBARRASSED!!
MISS RUUAN!!
BUT WE CAN USE FORCE!
EH...
LET'S NOT GO OVER-BOARD.
ARE YOU GOING TO ASSAULT HIM?
WH-WHAT ARE YOU...?!!

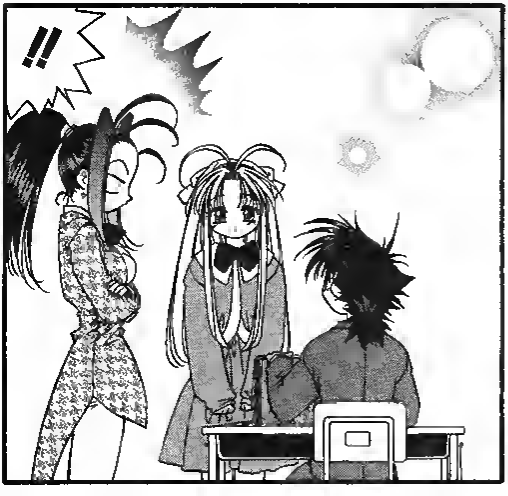
YOU'RE ...
...ON THE NIGHT SHIFT TONIGHT. NO EXCUSES!
YOU NEVER DO IT WHEN IT'S YOUR TURN.
WHAT DID RUUAN DO TO DESERVE THIS?!!
YOU'RE GOING TO DO IT NOW!!
THE NIGHT SHIFT, THAT IS...
A PRETTY HARD JOB.
BEING A TEACHER'S...
G-GOOD.
BUT..
IF RUUAN'S STAYING AT SCHOOL ALL NIGHT, THEN...
TONIGHT TASUKE AND SHAO ARE...
...GOING TO BE ALONE TOGETHER!!


I SHOULDN'T SPEAK OF MY MASTER THIS WAY, BUT MASTER TAA IS A SUPER-LATE BLOOMER.
ARE YOU LISTENING?


SO...
...THAT'S BASICALLY WHAT THE NIGHT SHIFT ENTAILS.
ANY QUESTIONS?
WELL, THERE'S NO CHANCE OF ANYTHING HAPPENING WITH THOSE TWO ANYWAY.
FACULTY


AND SHAORIN'S TOO DITZY TO EVEN UNDERSTAND LOVE...
HELLOOO, MISS RUUAN...


HEY SHOUKO! YOU HAVE CLEAN-UP DUTY!
WHAT...?
2ND YEAR CLASS 1


!!

THE NIGHT SHIFT?

YOU'RE HAPPY I HAVE TO WORK, AREN'T YOU?!!
WHY AREN'T YOU TELLING ME I'M WRONG?!
WHAT? THAT'S...
...IMPOSSIBLE
YOU TWO! I SAW THAT LOOK!
WOW, THAT MUST BE HARD WORK.
HMM?
MAYBE I'LL SPEND THE NIGHT AT SCHOOL.
OKAY, LET'S MAKE A PLAN!
WE SERIOUSLY HAVE TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS OR THERE'S GONNA BE TROUBLE.
LIAR!!
I JUST THOUGHT IT WAS A LOT OF WORK FOR YOU.
SO...
I KNOW LADY GETTEN...
...WON'T FORGET THAT SHE'S A SHUGOGETTEN.
IT'S ALL RIGHT RISHU.
...EVERYTHING'S GONNA BE FINE.
LADY SHAO..!

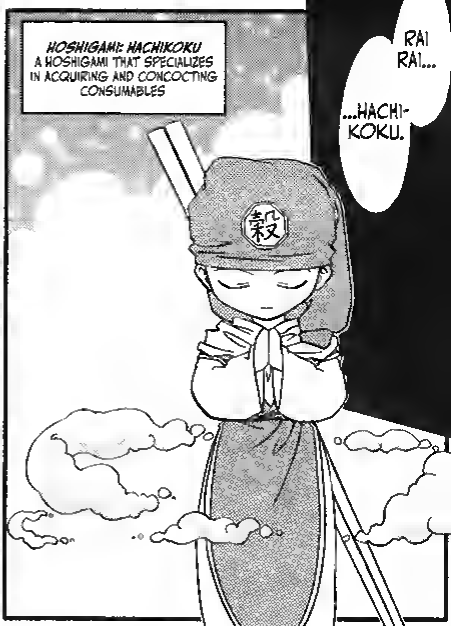
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
WH--
WHEN WE WERE AT THE BEACH WE ENDED UP PLAYING WITH FIREWORKS ALL NIGHT AND...
OH WELL, SHAO PROBABLY WON'T NOTICE, SO IT'LL BE ALL RIGHT.
EVEN THOUGH THAT'S KINDA SAD..
...NOW THIS IS REALLY THE FIRST TIME I GET TO BE ALONE WITH SHAO SINCE RUUAN ARRIVED.
BTHUMP
BTHUMP
BTHUMP
BTHUMP

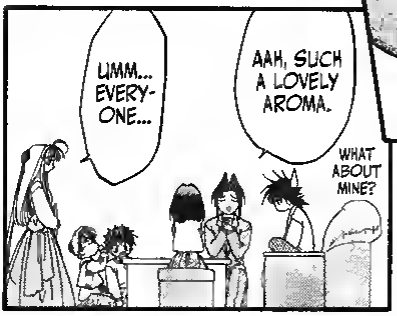
I ALWAYS THINK IT'S SUCH A PAIN WHEN RUUAN'S HANGING AROUND, BUT...
BUT IT'S LIKE... YOU KNOW...
GULP
GULP
OOH, WHAT A WASTE. WHAT A WASTE!
...WHENEVER SHE'S GONE THERE'S ALWAYS THIS AWKWARD SILENCE.
MASTER TASUKE, WE HAVE A LOT OF TEA LEFT.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO GET EVERY LAST DROP
DING DONG!!
SLIP
SPLASH
OOH, WHY AM I SO STUPID?
SWEATING BUCKETS
TH-THANKS.

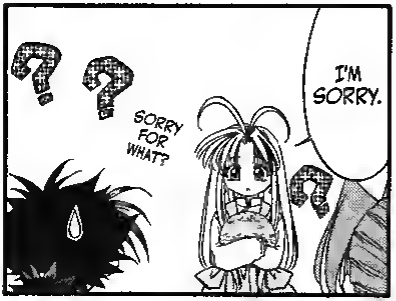
HOOOOOT!!
EEK!
I'M SORRY! I'M SORRY! I'M SORRY!
YO, TASUKE. HOW ABOUT A STUDY SESSION?
NGH! MISS RUUAAAN!
WHOOOAAA!
WH-WHAT'S GOING ON?!
WHAT?
HUH?
AKASHI
WHAT ARE YOU GUYS DOING?!!
TASUKE, YOU JEEERK!!
MISS SHIORI! DID HE DO ANYTHING TO YOU?!
TAKASHI, THAT HURTS.
URF!!

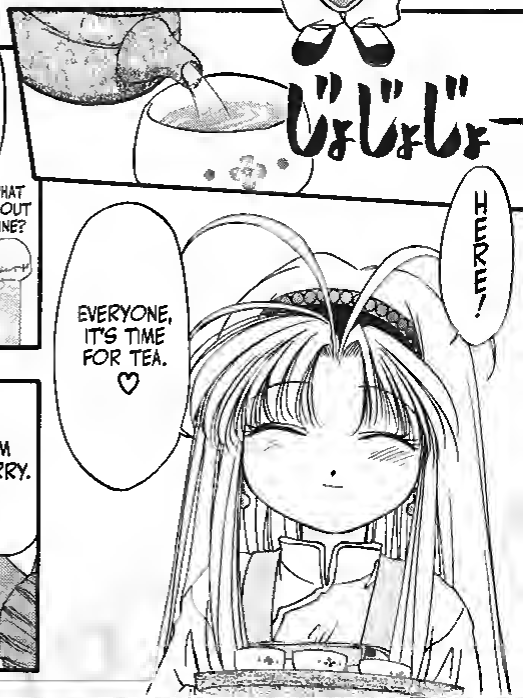
TAKASHI, DO YOU KNOW HOW TO PLAY CHESS?
I THOUGHT WE WERE GONNA STUDY.
WELL, WHAT CAN I SAY? IT ALWAYS ENDS UP LIKE THIS.
WHY DON'T YA PLAY WITH TASUKE?
BUT TASUKE SAID HE DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO PLAY!
ふぅ
...SHAO?

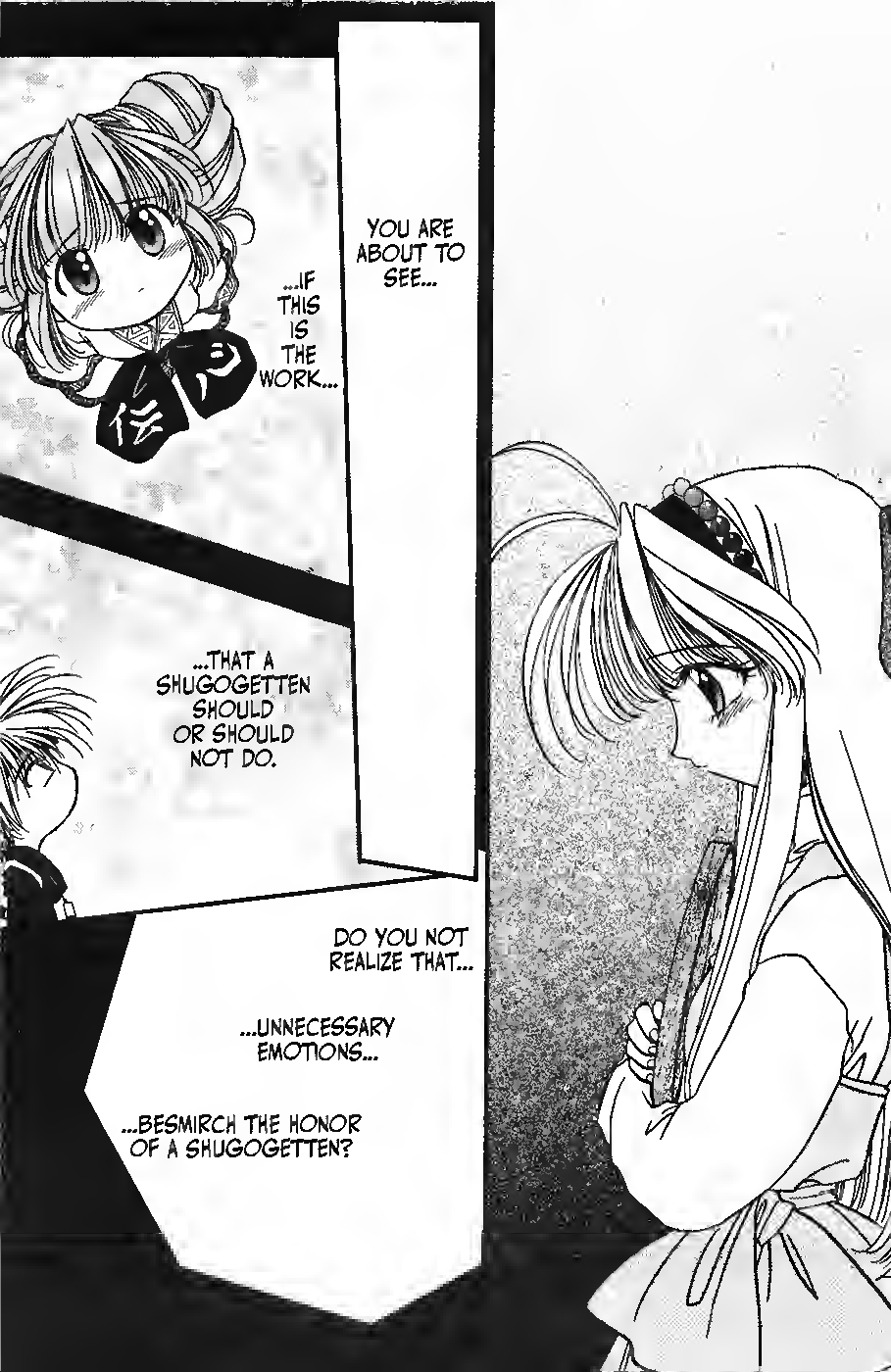
UMM...
I HAVE A FAVOR TO ASK OF YOU, HACHI-KOKU.


HOSHIGAMI: HACHIKOKU
A HOSHIGAMI THAT SPECIALIZES IN ACQUIRING AND CONCOCTING CONSUMABLES
RA! RA!...
...HACHI-KOKU.


UMM... EVERY-ONE...
AAH, SUCH A LOVELY AROMA.
WHAT ABOUT MINE?


I'M SORRY.
SORRY FOR WHAT?


じょじょじょ
EVERYONE, IT'S TIME FOR TEA. ♡
HEEE~


YOU ARE ABOUT TO SEE...
...IF THIS IS THE WORK...
イミン
...THAT A SHUGOGETTEN SHOULD OR SHOULD NOT DO.
DO YOU NOT REALIZE THAT...
...UNNECESSARY EMOTIONS...
...BESMIRCH THE HONOR OF A SHUGOGETTEN?

...NGH.
HMM...♡
NMM...
THIS IS NO LONGER...
...A PLACE THAT SUCH AS WE SHOULD BE.
SNORE
SNORE
SNORE
WHY DID EVERYONE SUDDENLY FALL ASLEEP?
TOO MUCH EXCITEMENT?
.....

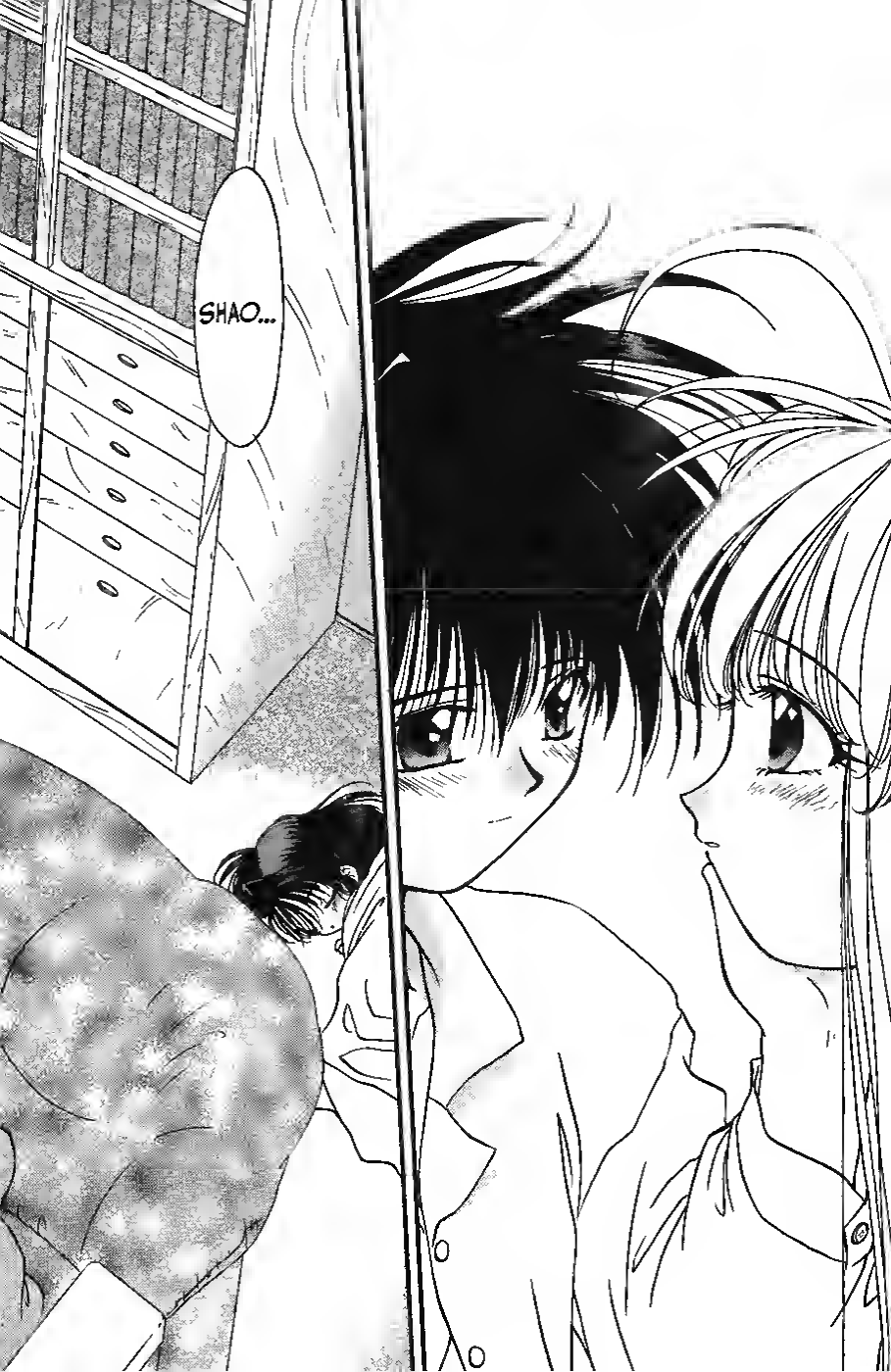
I...
...MADE...
...THEM GO TO SLEEP.
THE TEA I GAVE THEM...
...HAD SLEEP INDUCING HERBS IN IT.
BECAUSE TONIGHT I WANTED...
...TO TALK TO YOU ALONE, MASTER TASUKE.

SHAO
...

WHOOOA!!
MY SOUL SCREAMS FOR...!!!
WHAT THE HECK WAS THAT ABOUT?
HE'S JUST TALKING IN HIS SLEEP!
SHOOT!!
OH...I FORGOT ...

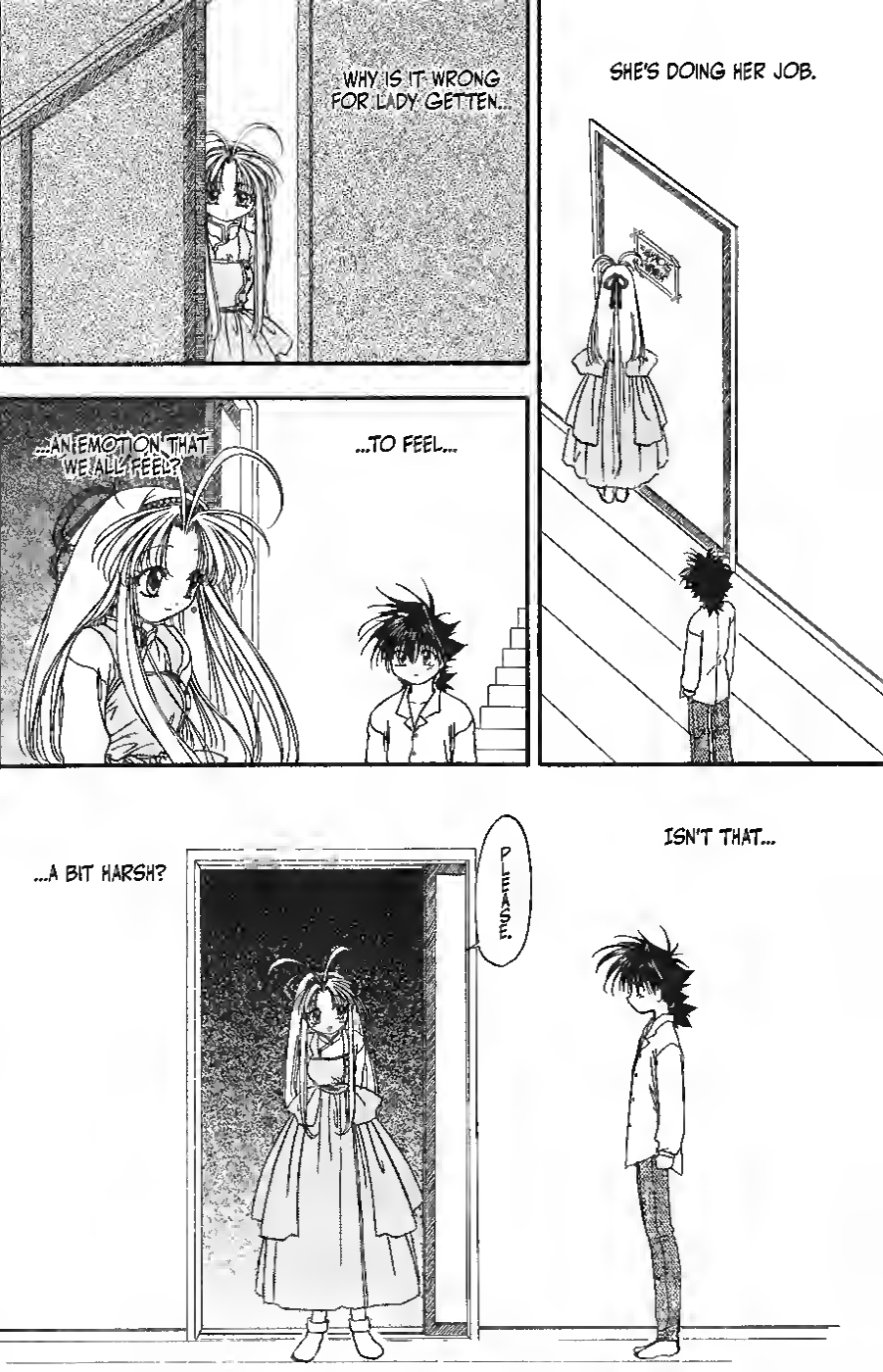
HOW IS YOUR LEG?
IS THE BURN ALL RIGHT?
じ
UHH... UMM... UMM...
わたわたわたわた
IT...
IT'S FINE!! FINE!
?

THANK YOU ...
...FOR WORRY-ING ABOUT ME.
.....


SHAO...

タスケ、ちょっとエッチすぎ!!
WHAAT?
I HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING YET...
TASUKE, YOU'RE SO NAUGHTYYY!
SHALL WE TALK ...
...IN MY ROOM?
UMM ...
MASTER TASUKE ...
NOO. REALLY, TASUKE
MY SOUL!!
YOOUUU...

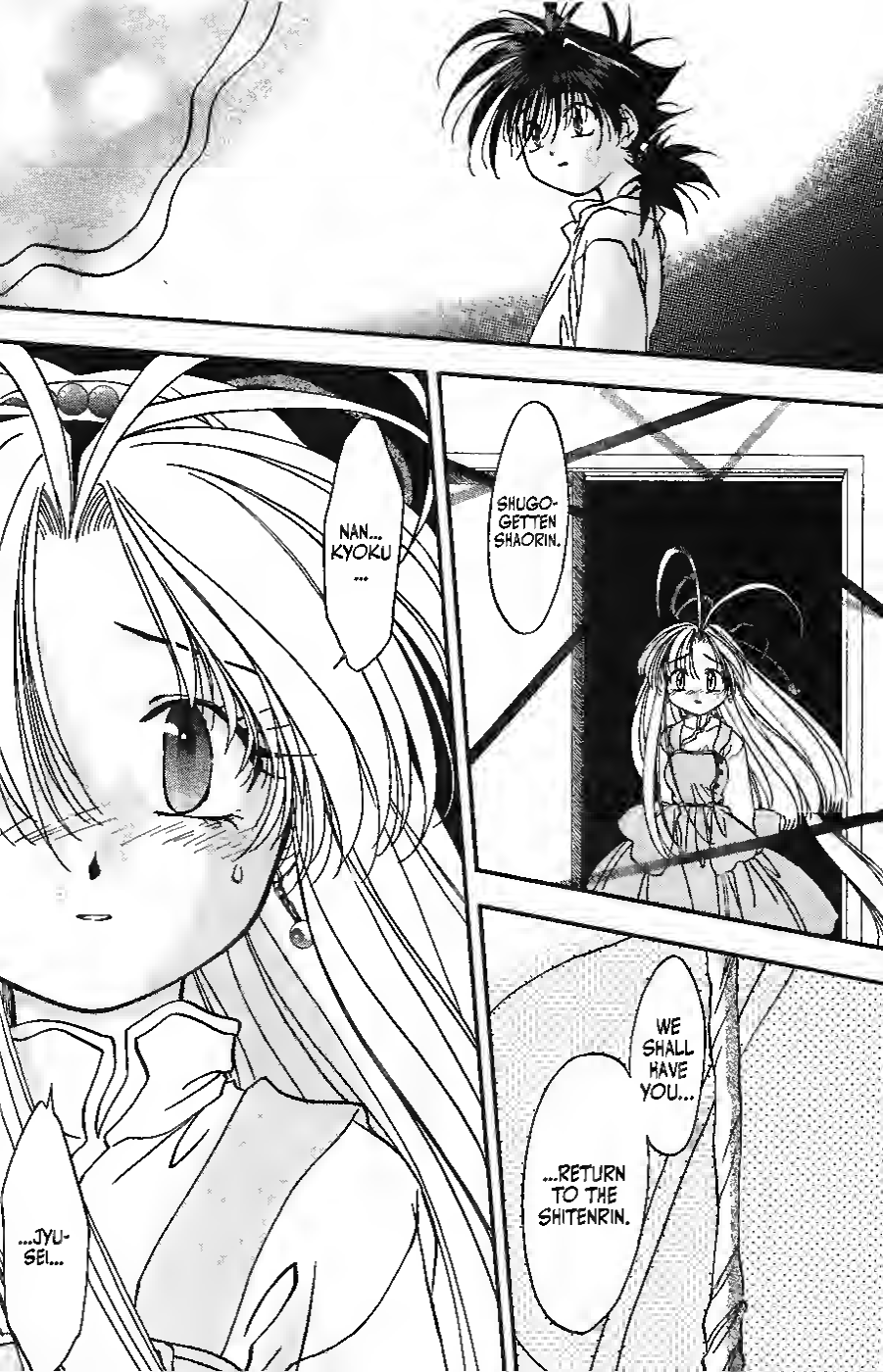
...WHY IT'S NOT ALLOWED.
HEY... WE DON'T UNDERSTAND...
LADY GETTEN'S REALLY KIND TO US JUST LIKE BEFORE AND..
...SHE'S PROTECTING HER MASTER LIKE SHE SHE'S SUPPOSED TO.
UH...


WHY IS IT WRONG FOR LADY GETTEN..
SHE'S DOING HER JOB.
...AN EMOTION THAT WE ALL FEEL?
...TO FEEL...
...A BIT HARSH?
PLEASE!
ISN'T THAT...

I'M SURE SHAO...
...REALLY JUST WANTS TO TALK TO ME...IN HER ROOM...
.....
NO REASON FOR MY HEART TO START RACING.
?
BTHUMP
BTHUMP
BTHUMP
BTHUMP
BTHUMP
CALM DOWN, I'M JUST GOING TO HER ROOM... TO TALK...
!...
MASTER TASUKE?
STIFF
STOP POUNDING!!

NOTHING... I MEAN, YEAH-- HUH?
I'M...
...IN HER ROOM!!
LADY GETTEN...
LADY SHAO...

THAT'S FAR ENOUGH!!


...JYU-SEI...
NAN... KYOKU ...
SHUGO-GETTEN SHAORIN.
WE SHALL HAVE YOU...
...RETURN TO THE SHITENRIN.

SHUGO-GETTEN SHAORIN.
WE SHALL HAVE YOU...
...RETURN TO THE SHITENRIN.
.....

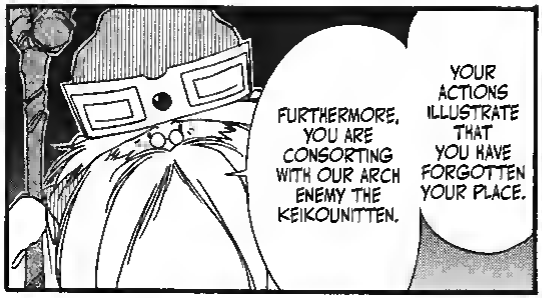
CHAPTER 32
FAREWELL, SHUGOGETTEN (PART TWO)

RETURN...
...TO THE SHITENRIN?!
.....
MASTER TASUKE.

YOU WHO ARE OUR LIEGE...
...THE SHUGO-GETTEN...
...REST YOUR FLESH FOR A WHILE...
OH...

HUMPH.
SO I FIND YOU TWO ALONE IN SHAORIN'S ROOM, HMM?
WHAT WOULD'VE HAPPENED IF I HADN'T DITCHED MY SHIFT AND FLOWN OVER HERE?
HEEEEY!!
YOU ARE IN HERE?!!
GRRR!!
NGH, NGH, NGH...NGH.
?
WHAT'S THIS?!
WHY IS THE KEIKOUNITTEN HERE?!!
THOSE ARE MY LINES!!
YOU OLD GEEZER.
YOU NEARLY KILLED ME!
PHEW.

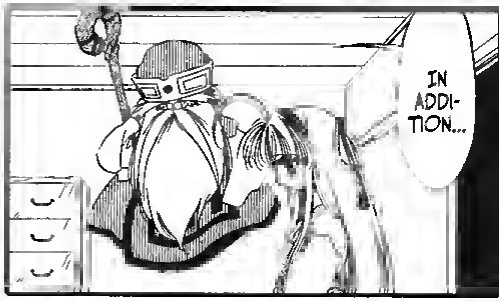
MASTER TAA, I'LL TELL YOU ONE THING.
IF I KNOW THIS GEEZER, HE HASN'T EVEN INTRODUCED HIMSELF.
AFTER ALL, SHAKUNA'S THE ONLY THING ON HIS MIND.
THIS HOSHIGAMI NANKYOKU JYUSEI IS...
...THE HIGHEST RANKING HOSHIGAMI AND THE SHUGO-GETTEN'S CARETAKER.
AND...
...HE'S THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN LIMIT THE SHUGO-GETTEN'S ACTIVITIES BESIDES HER MASTER.
THAT AND HE'S AN UNBELIEVABLY STUBBORN OLD GEEZER.
WHAZAAT?!
ヒソ
ヒソ


YOUR ACTIONS ILLUSTRATE THAT YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN YOUR PLACE.
FURTHERMORE, YOU ARE CONSORTING WITH OUR ARCH ENEMY THE KEIKOUNITTEN.

SHAORIN...
...YOU KNOW I AM SADDENED.

SHAORIN, I EXPECTED BETTER FROM YOU.

ANY FURTHER?
AH... NO...
ANYWAY...


IN ADDITION...

GO ANY FURTHER...
IF YOUR FEELINGS TOWARD YOUR MASTER...

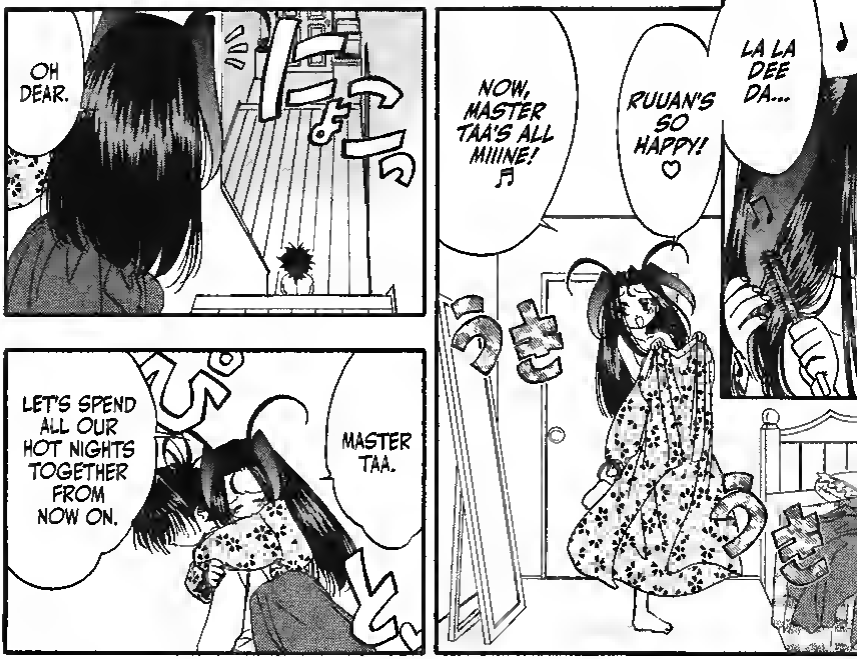
WE SHALL HAVE YOU...
...RETURN TO THE SHITENRIN.
SHAORIN.
NANKYOKU JYUSEI...
...I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE
I...
THIS IS WHERE I WANT TO BE.
STOP...
I DON'T WANT TO GO BACK!!

I WANT TO BE WITH MASTER TASUKE!!
SHAO!!
MASTER TASUKE...
MASTER TASUKE...
MASTER TASUKE...

SHAO..?

SHAORIN HAS RETURNED TO THE SHITENRIN.
SHE WILL NOT APPEAR BEFORE YOU AGAIN.
SORRY ABOUT THAT, KID.
SIMPLY CONSIDER WHAT YOU HAVE SEEN AS BUT A DREAM AND...
...FORGET ABOUT SHAORIN.
I BID YOU FARE-WELL.
.....
IT CAN'T BE TRUE...

THERE'S ...
A DREAM...
THERE'S NO WAY...
...I COULD FORGET ABOUT SHAO AND EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED.


LA LA DEE DA...
RUUAN'S SO HAPPY! ♡
NOW, MASTER TAA'S ALL MIIINE! ♬
OH DEAR.
MASTER TAA.
LET'S SPEND ALL OUR HOT NIGHTS TOGETHER FROM NOW ON.

.....

HEY, RUUAN.
I...
IT'S JUST...A RING...
...NOW.
THE SHITEN-RIN...
...JUST WANTED SHAO...
...TO STAY BY MY SIDE.
WHY...?
WHY...
...DID THIS HAPPEN?

I'M ALL ALONE IN THIS HOUSE.
MY MOM AND DAD...
...AND MY SISTER...
...ARE NEVER HERE, BUT...
...AS LONG AS SHAO WAS WITH ME...
...EVERY-THING...
...WAS OKAY.
SO...
...WHY?!!

I JUST...
WHY CAN'T I...
...BE WITH THE PEOPLE WHO ARE IMPORTANT TO ME?!!
...WANT TO BE WITH SHAO, THAT'S ALL!!
MASTER TASUKE...

I TOLD YOU THAT...
MASTER TASUKE.
I'M SORRY...
...I WOULD LIKE TO PROTECT YOU FROM THE ISOLATION AND LONELINESS...
...IN YOUR SOUL.
I SAID I WOULD PROTECT YOU, BUT...
...I'M MAKING YOU CRY.
I'M MAKING YOU FEEL ISOLATED.
I'M MAKING YOU FEEL LONELY.
YES, IT'S PROBABLY...

...YOUR SOUL.
...THAT I CAN'T PROTECT...
BECAUSE I'M A SHUGO-GETTEN...
NANKYOKU JYUSEI...
I WISH...
...I WASN'T A SHUGO-GETTEN.

DON'T CRY.
MASTER TAA.
BY MY HONOR AS A KEIKO-UNITTEN...
...I WON'T LET YOU CRY ANY-MORE.
ALTHOUGH IT IS A BIT IRRITATING THAT...
...YOU AREN'T HAPPY WITH JUST ME HERE...

I TOLD YOU TO COME OUT, YOU GRUMPY OLD GEEZER!!!
TAKE THIS!
HEEEEEY! GET OUT HERE, NANKYOKU JYUSEI!!
.....
AARGH!!
IF YOU DON'T COME OUT, I'LL CRUMBLE THE SHITENRIN AND TURN IT INTO FERTILIZER SO YOU'D NEVER COME OUT AGAIN!!!
UH... UMM...
WELL, WELL...

I SHOULDN'T LOWER MYSELF BY TALKING TO YOU
YOU ARE WITHOUT DIGNITY AND AS CRUDE AS EVER.
SO VERY DIFFERENT FROM MY SWEET SHAORIN.
REALLY. I CANNOT BELIEVE THAT THE LIKES OF YOU COULD BREAK THE SHITENRIN, BUT...
...I WON'T STAND FOR IT BEING USED AS FERTILIZER.
WHAT IS IT THAT YOU WANT, KEIKO-UNITTEN? I SHALL GRANT YOU AN AUDIENCE AND NOTHING MORE.
RELEASE SHAORIN FROM THE SHITENRIN!!

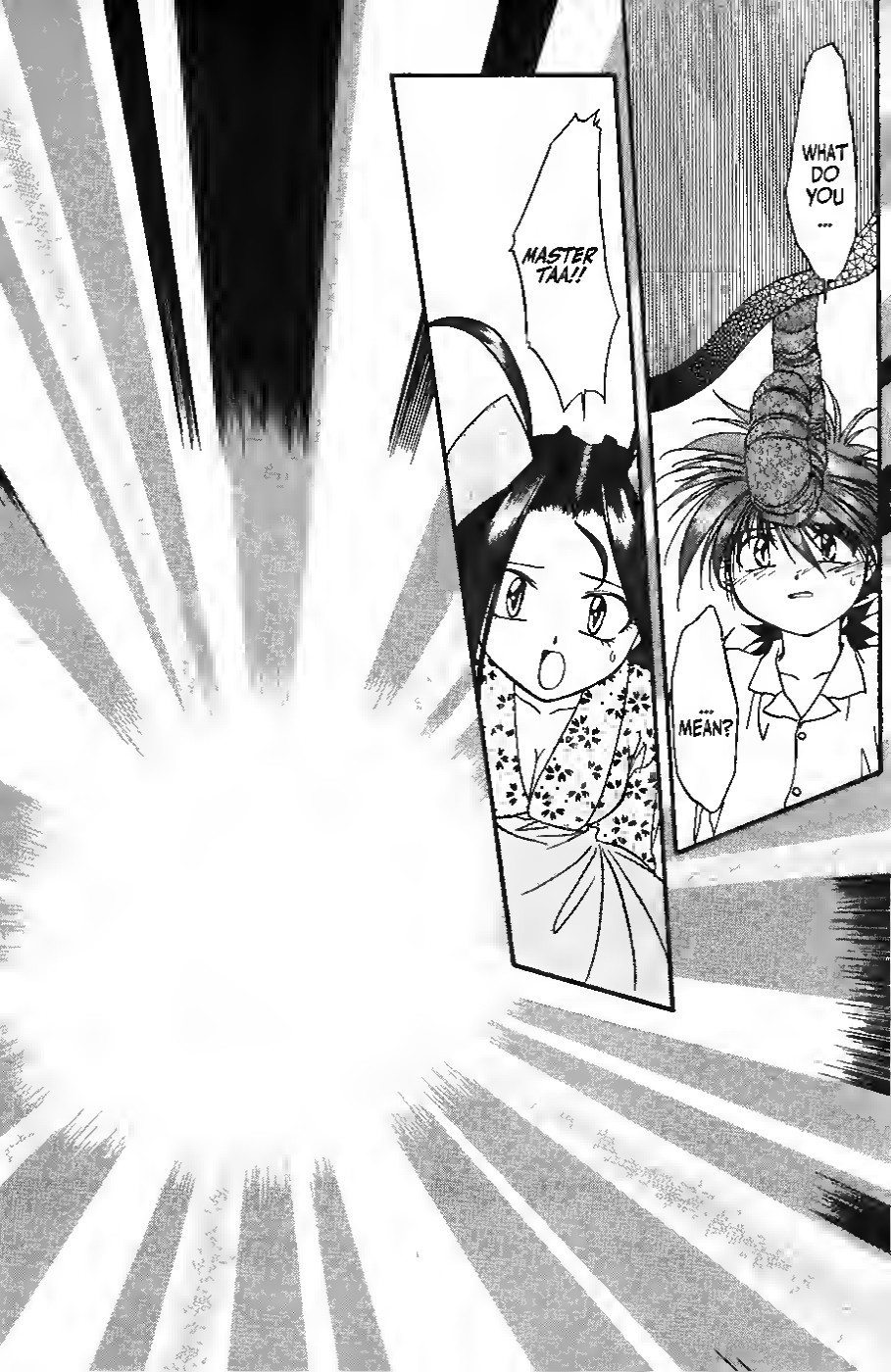
LET US LEAVE THIS DEPRESSING BUSINESS ALONE.
BOY, I NEED TO SPEAK WITH YOU.
DON'T BE FOOLISH.
OF COURSE I WILL NOT GRANT YOU THAT.
WHAT DID YOU JUST SAY, YOU ROTTEN GEEZER!
BECAUSE YOU REGRET THE SEPARATION...
...SHAORIN DOES...
...NOTHING BUT CRY IN THE SHITENRIN.

...SHE WILL NEVER...
...ACCEPT THIS SEPARATION FROM YOU.
AT THIS RATE...
...I WILL ASSIGN YOU YOUR FINAL DUTY AS THE SHUGOGETTEN'S MASTER.
THEREFORE...
...THE SHUGOGETTEN'S TRUE DUTIES AND...
YOU MUST...
...ACCEPT, IN YOUR OWN HEART...

...THE FATE SHE CANNOT ESCAPE.
THEN...
...YOU SHALL ACCEPT THE FACT THAT...
...YOU ARE NOT SUITED TO BE THE SHUGOGET-TEN'S LIEGE.

.....
ONLY THEN...
...WILL SHAORIN BE ABLE TO LET GO.
BUT...
THERE'S NO WAY...
...I CAN ACCEPT THAT!!

NO...
IF YOU TRULY ARE...
...SO PURE OF HEART AS TO SUMMON THE SHUGOGETTEN FROM THE SHITENRIN...
...THEN IT IS CERTAIN...
...THAT YOU SHALL ACCEPT IT!!


WHAT DO YOU ...
MASTER TAA!!
...MEAN?

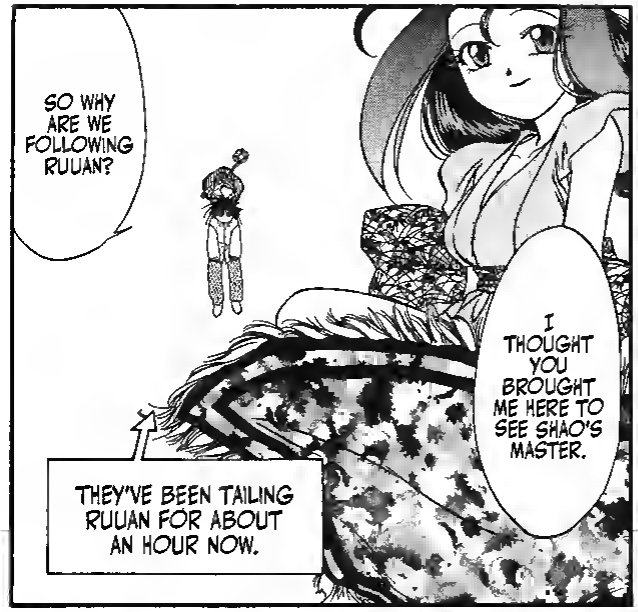
...Y.
HEEY!
WAKE UP!!
YOU...
YOU CAN'T SLEEP THERE.
YOU'LL GET TRAMPLED BY THE HORSES.
HORSES?
WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
SEE?
NO WAY!!

TH-THIS IS...
WHERE IN THE WORLD AM I?!
LOOK AT THAT KID. WHAT'S WITH HIS CLOTHES?
NOOO. WAIT FOR ME, MY LIEGE.
WHA--? W-WAIT.
たったかた
HEY, RUUAN, WE'RE LEAVING SOON!!
LIEGE?
OH, YES!
THIS IS CHINA.

I HAVE BROUGHT YOU TO THE AGE...
...IN WHICH LIVED THE SHUGO-GETTEN'S MASTER THREE GEN-ERATIONS BEFORE YOU.
HERE...
...YOU WILL LEARN THE TRUTH OF SHUGO-GETTEN SHAORIN.
WAAAH, RUUAN GOT LEFT BEHIIIIND.
WHAT'S GOING ON?

MISS RUUAN!!
AH... UMM...
UMM... UUHH.
AH!
MASTER TAA AND SHAORIN WENT TO...UH...
DON'T WORRY ...
...I'LL FIGURE IT OUT BY TOMORROW!!
AHH MISS RUUAN!
WHAT HAPPENED?!
FLASH
JUST GO HOME FOR NOW!!
REALLY, YOU GOTTA BE KIDDING!!
WHY DOES RUUAN HAVE TO COVER UP FOR THEM WHEN SHE'S THE ONE LEFT BEHIND AGAIN?!

CHAPTER 33
FAREWELL, SHUGOGETTEN (PART THREE)

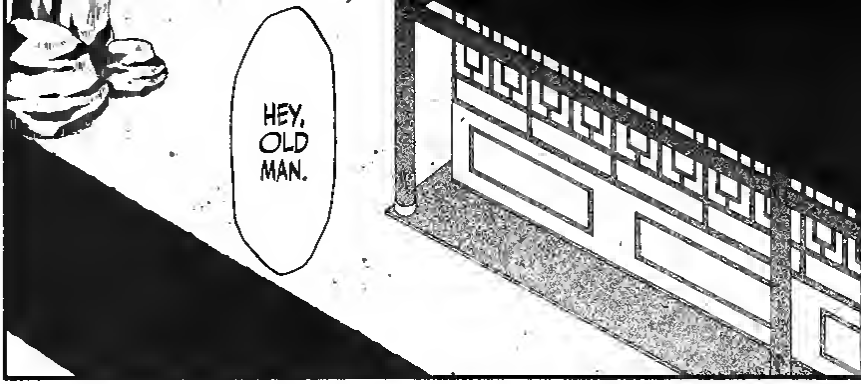

SO WHY ARE WE FOLLOWING RUUAN?
THEY'VE BEEN TAILING RUUAN FOR ABOUT AN HOUR NOW.
I THOUGHT YOU BROUGHT ME HERE TO SEE SHAO'S MASTER.
HEY, OLD MAN... I JUST HAVE ONE QUESTION FOR YOU.
YES?

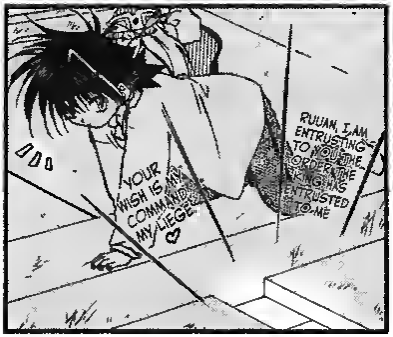
DO YOU EVEN KNOW WHERE YOU'RE GOING?
WHA--
WHAT IMPERTI-NENCE IS THIS?!!

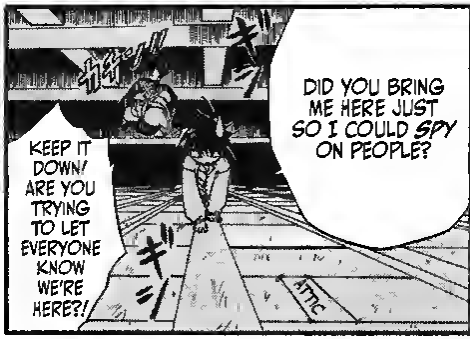
IT MAY APPEAR THAT WAY...
...BUT THIS IS THE MOST EXPEDIENT WAY TO SEE SHAORIN.
IT...

.....

I SEE...
IT SURE LOOKS LIKE WE'RE FOLLOWING THEM THOUGH.
YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU'RE GOING, DO YOU?
THAT IS WHY I CHOSE THIS LANDING SIGHT!!
I HAVE BUSINESS WITH THE KEIKO-UNITTEN.
AH, AH!
ACTUALLY, IF WE'D LANDED CLOSER TO WHERE WE WANTED TO GO IN THE FIRST PLACE...
...WE WOULDN'T HAVE TO WANDER AROUND LIKE THIS.
I UNDER-STAND YOU HAVE A GRUDGE AGAINST ME, BUT...
...TO MAKE SUCH FALSE ACCUSATIONS ONLY MAKES YOURSELF APPEAR PATHETIC.
FALSE ACCUSA-TIONS?
I HAVEN'T, REALLY.
WE'VE ARRIVED AT THE HOUSE OF THE KEIKOUNITTEN'S MASTER.
.....
I SAID I DIDN'T MAKE ANY FALSE ACCUSA-TIONS!
DIDN'T I?!!
HUH?!


HEY, OLD MAN.


RUIJIAN, I AM ENTRUSTING YOU WITH THE FORTUNE AND THE FEELINGS ENTRUSTED TO ME
YOUR WISH IS MY COMMAND, MY LIEGE.

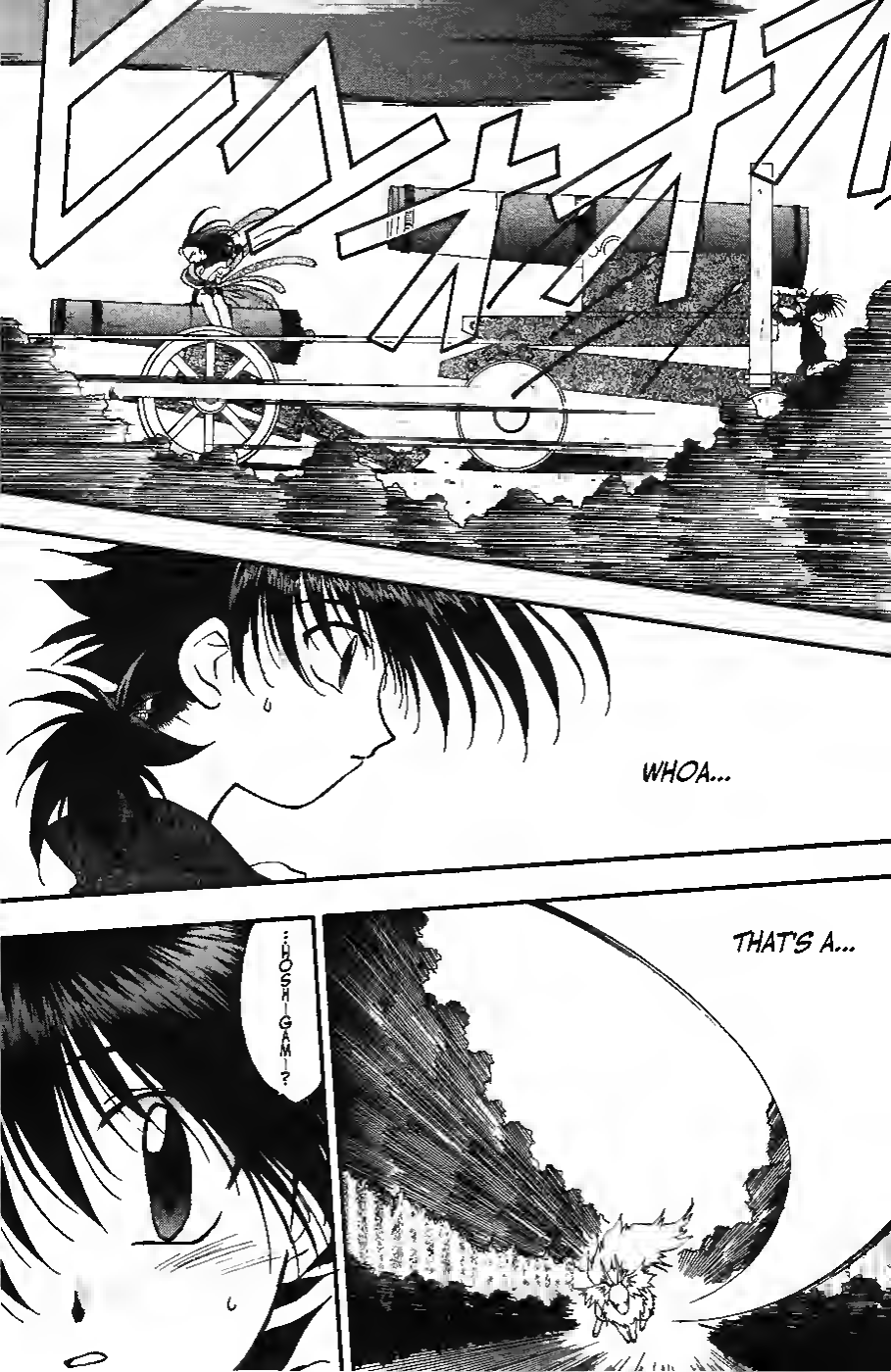

DID YOU BRING ME HERE JUST SO I COULD SPY ON PEOPLE?
KEEP IT DOWN! ARE YOU TRYING TO LET EVERYONE KNOW WE'RE HERE?!
ATTIC

I WOULD LIKE YOU TO DO AWAY WITH...
...A WOMAN BY THE NAME OF MEIHOA...
...WHO LIVES HIDDEN IN THE DEPTHS OF A CERTAIN MOUNTAIN.
I WAS RIGHT TO COME HERE AFTER ALL.
NOW WE CAN FIND OUR WAY TO SHAORIN.
OOPS! YOU JUST CONFESSED YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE TO GO!

LADY MEIHOA IS THE SHUGO-GETTEN'S MASTER IN THIS AGE.
MEIHOA IS...?
...VENTURE WITH ME INTO THE MOUNTAINS WHERE LADY MEIHOA LIVES.
UNDER-STAND THIS.
YOU ARE ABOUT TO...
...YOU WILL UNDERSTAND THE DUTIES AND TRUE FATE OF THE SHUGO-GETTEN.
WHEN YOU WITNESS SHAORIN AS SHE SERVES LADY MEIHOA...

I AM ABOUT TO SEE...
OOH! THERE IT IS! SHAORIN'S MOUNTAIN!
カリ ゴゴゴゴゴ
SHAO WHO SERVES ANOTHER M. STER.
...SHAO OF THIS AGE.
†DRESSED MORE APPROPRIATELY FOR THE OCCASION.
...THAN THE SHAO I KNOW.
...OF THIS AGE WILL BE DIFFERENT...
I WONDER IF SHAO...

HOSHIGAMI: TENKOU A RECONNAISSANCE HOSHIGAMI WHO CAN SEE VAST AREAS FROM THE AIR


WHOA...
THAT'S A...
...HOSHIGAMI?

TIME TO TAKE OUR LEAVE, KID!!
HUH?
HOSHIGAMI: TENIN SPECIALIZES IN ATTACKS UTILIZING SPEED.
PHEW. THAT WAS A CLOSE ONE!
WE WERE ABOUT TO GET DANGEROUSLY INVOLVED
REALLY. HOW COULD TENIN NOT REALIZE I WAS THERE?
MORE IMPORTANTLY, HOW CAN YOU JUST THROW ME AROUND LIKE THAT?
PLEASE BE MORE CAREFUL WITH ME.

HUMPH!
THAT WAS A BIT MUCH.
SHAO!!
SHUGO-GETTEN SHAORIN.
I'VE COME...
...FOR THE LIFE OF YOUR LIEGE.

FIRST OF ALL...
...YOU'RE IN MY WAY! BE GONE!!
RAI, RAI...
TENKEI!!
HOSHIGAMI: TENKEI
A BIRD OF FIRE WHOSE BODY IS COVERED IN FLAMES.

LEAVE HERE.
YOU'RE WASTING YOUR TIME.
HA!
WHAT NON-SENSE IS THAT?
もくもく
THE BATTLE HAS JUST BEGUN!
ボオオオ
THEY IGNITED HER EXPLOSIVES.
EEP.

NEXT TIME WE MEET, YOU AND YOUR LIEGE WILL NOT ESCAPE WITH YOUR LIVES!!
I'LL BE BACK!! DON'T THINK THIS IS OVER!!
DAAMMIT!!!
SHAORIN, REMEMBER THIS!!
SHAO...?

THAT OLD WOMAN IS...
...SHAO'S MASTER?
LOOK CAREFULLY, BOY.
THERE IS LADY MEIHOA.
WHY...
...DO THEY WANT TO KILL AN OLD LADY LIKE HER?
LADY MEIHOA IS...
...THE ONLY LIVING PRINCESS FROM A KINGDOM THAT FELL A FEW DECADES HENCE.
THE KING OF THIS COUNTRY IS THE ONE WHO DESTROYED HER KINGDOM, AND NOW...
...HE FEARS THE SHADOWS OF THAT RUINED EMPIRE.

YOU THERE!
HOWEVER, THE LADY MEIHOA HAS NO INTENTION OF REVENGE.
.....
WH-WHO...
...ME?!
WH-WHEN DID SHE SEE US?!
LADY MEIHOA SAYS YOU ARE TO COME INSIDE.
ARE YOU LOOK-ING FOR SOME-ONE?
DO NOT HESITATE, ENTER.
.....

SOMEHOW...
WHA...? OH.
YES. I'M TASUKE SHICHIRI.
MAY WE KNOW YOUR NAME?
WE ARE...
...MEIHOA.
...PUTS ME AT EASE.
...TALKING TO HER...
A YOUNG MAN SUCH AS YOURSELF MAY FIND IT TIRESOME, BUT...
HOW NOW, TASUKE?
IT HAS BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE WE HAVE SPOKEN WITH ANYONE OTHER THAN THOSE OF THIS HOUSE.
TASUKE, IS IT?
...OF KEEPING THIS OLD LADY COMPANY?
...WOULD YOU DO US THE HONOR ...

LADY MEIHOA WAS...
...REALLY GRATEFUL TO YOU.
...MAKES US SO HAPPY THAT THERE ARE NOT WORDS ADEQUATE TO EXPRESS OUR GRATITUDE.
THE FACT THAT SHE HAS DONE HER BEST TO PROTECT US ALL THIS TIME...
HEY...
...SHAO.
BUT SHAO...
LADY MEIHOA SAYS SHE WON'T LIVE FOR MUCH LONGER.
UMM, OLD MAN...

SHE MUST ...
...REALIZE THAT LADY MEIHOA HAS LITTLE TIME LEFT.
SHAO ALREADY KNOWS THAT, DOESN'T SHE? I BET SHE DOES.
YET...
...SHE STILL TRIES SO HARD...
...TO PROTECT HER MASTER.
NOW YOU SEE, BOY. SLOWLY, YOU WILL BEGIN TO ACCEPT ...FOR YOURSELF...
...THE TRUTH OF THE SHUGOGETTEN AND HER FATE.

THEN YOU WILL RELEASE SHAORIN.
ROOOOOOOAAAAAAAR
...SO SHE WON'T SUFFER ANYMORE.
ROOOOOOAAAAAR
WHAT'S THAT?!
IT SEEMS THE KEIKOU-NITTEN HAS LAUNCHED ANOTHER ATTACK!!
WAIT, BOY, WHERE ARE YOU GOING?!!

I WANT TO HELP HER.
NOT BECAUSE I'M HER MASTER OR ANYTHING.
...SHOULD I DO?
WHAT...
...BECAUSE I LIKE HER.
JUST...
...BUT...
I WANT TO DO SOME-THING FOR SHAO...

SUR-
RENDER
ALREADY!
AND HAND
OVER
MEIHOA!!
THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO.
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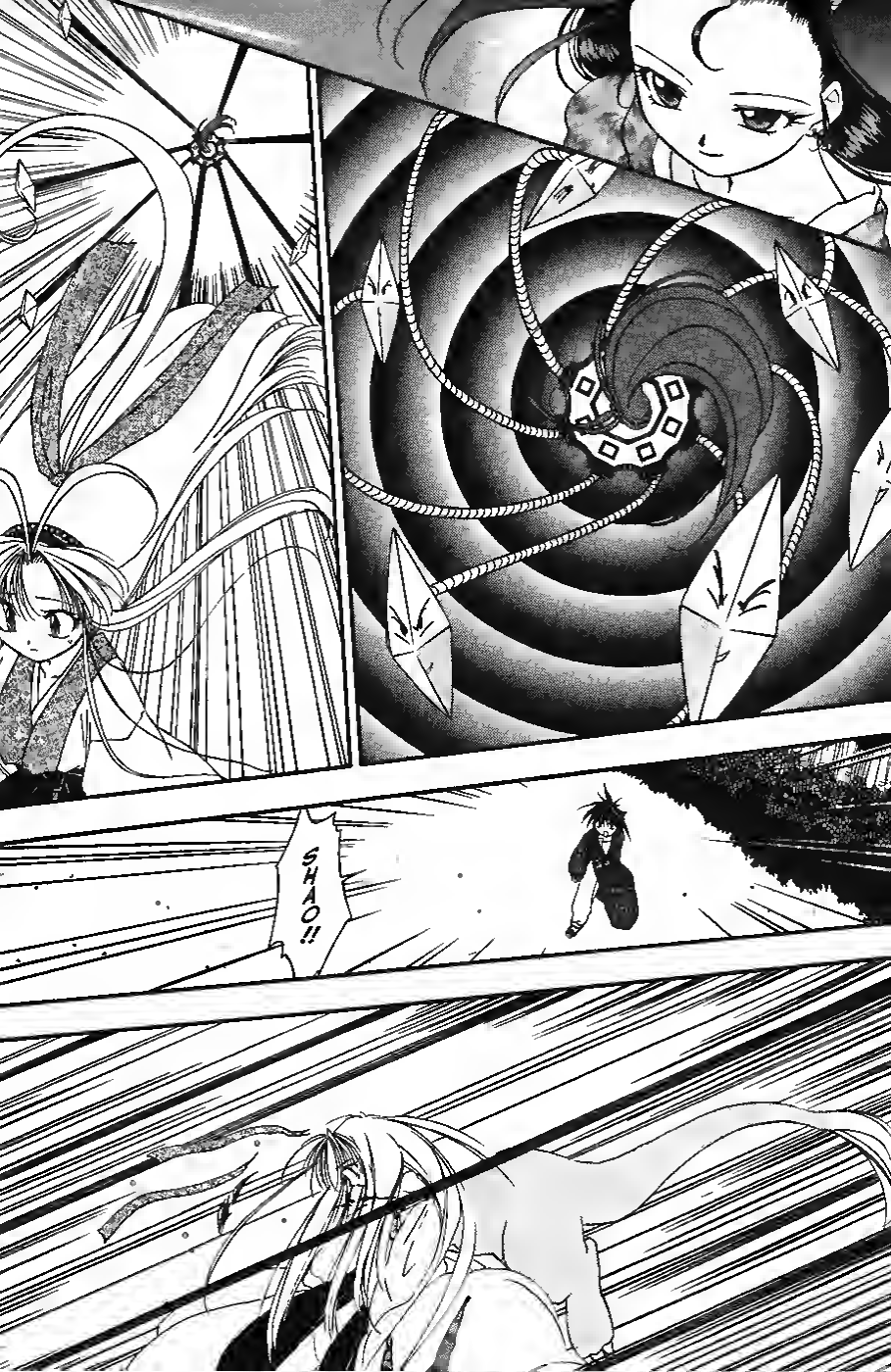

SHAO!!

...THE SHUGO-GETTEN.
I.... AM....
I WILL PROTECT MY MASTER ...
...UNTIL THE END!!
EVEN THOUGH AN UNAVOIDABLE END...
...MAY BE NEAR.

EEEK!!
RAI, RAI...
...HAKUTO SHICHI-SEI!!
JUST A...
JUST A MINUTE!

BOOOOM
DRAT! STUPID! I WON'T FORGET THIS!!
ゴゴゴゴゴゴ
SHAO!!

SHAO...
ALL THIS TIME...
...YOU PRO-TECT...
...GETTING HURT.
YOU KEEP...
...HAVE LONG TO LIVE.
...EVEN THOUGH YOU KNOW SHE DOESN'T...
...LADY MEIHOA...

NOW YOU UNDERSTAND.
TO PROTECT HER LIEGE...
...EVEN AT THE SACRIFICE OF HERSELF ...
THAT IS THE FATE OF THE SHUGO-GETTEN.
EVEN THOUGH ...
...SHE COMMITS HER LIFE...
...TO PROTECTING HER LIEGE...
...SHE KNOWS THEY MUST ONE DAY PART FOR GOOD.

MEETINGS AND PARTINGS THAT CONTINUE FOR ETERNITY.
AND EACH TIME...
...SHE MUST FACE HER FATE AND FIND THE STRENGTH TO EMBARK AGAIN.
THEN SHE WILL MEET A NEW LIEGE...
...WHOM SHE WILL PROTECT...
...AND WITH WHOM SHE WILL AGAIN EVEN-TUALLY PART.
THAT IS...
...THE TRUE FATE OF THE SHUGO-GETTEN.

...HAS NOTHING TO OFFER SHAO.
!!!
SO... SOME-ONE LIKE ME...
IS THAT WHAT YOU WANTED ME TO SEE?
...ONE THING.
THERE IS JUST...
YOU MUST ACCEPT IN YOUR HEART THAT...
...IT IS NOT APPROPRIATE FOR YOU TO BE THE SHUGOGET-TEN'S LIEGE.
RIGHT NOW...
...SHAORIN WILL STILL BE ABLE TO OVER-COME THE NECESSARY PARTING WITH YOU.

CHAPTER 34
FAREWELL, SHUGOGETTEN (PART FOUR)

OLD MAN...
I...
...UNDERSTAND WHY YOU BROUGHT ME HERE AND SHOWED ME...
...THE SHAO FROM THE PAST.

GOOD. NOW YOU SEE, THE SHUGO-GETTEN ...
...MUST CONTINUE TO PART WITH HER LIEGES.
SHE MUST BEAR THIS DIFFICULT FATE.
IT IS BE-CAUSE OF THAT FATE...
...IS NOT ALLOWED TO FALL IN LOVE.
...THE SHUGO-GETTEN ...

IF SHE SHOULD FALL IN LOVE WITH HER MASTER, THEN...
...THE INEVITABLE PARTING...
...WOULD BE SO PAINFUL THAT SHE MAY NOT RECOVER FROM IT.
HOW-EVER, SHOULD SHE...
... STAY WITH YOU ANY LONGER, HEAVEN FORBID--
OLD MAN.
YOU DON'T WANT TO SEE...
...SHAO SUFFER EITHER, DO YOU?

MASTER TASUKE...
I WANTED YOU TO KNOW ABOUT ME.
BECAUSE I KNEW YOU WOULD ACCEPT IT.
BUT...
...I...
BECAUSE YOU HAVE ALWAYS BEEN SO KIND TO ME.

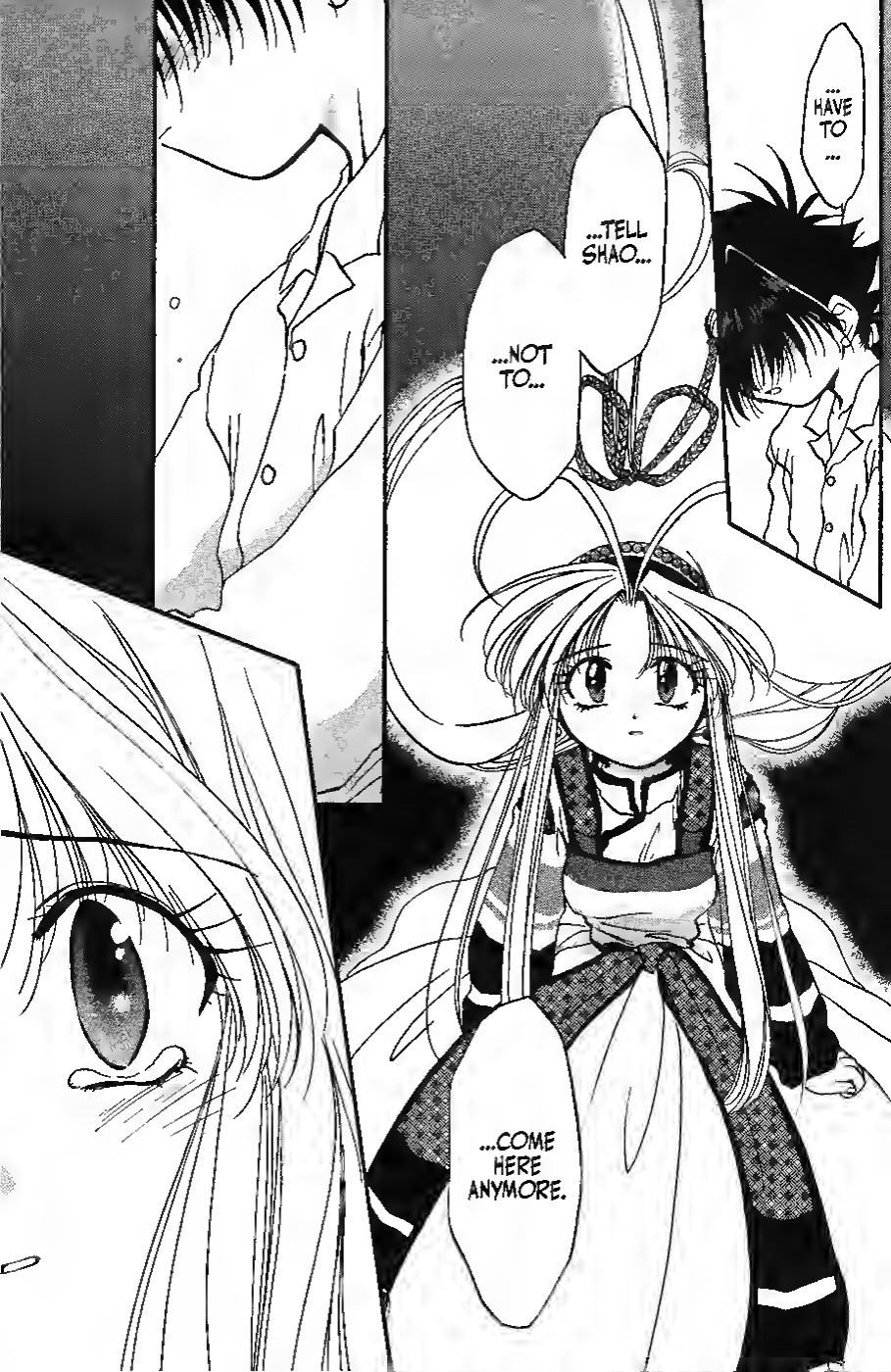
I...
YEP.
OKAY!
I GOT IT.
I UNDERSTAND ...
...WHAT YOU WANT TO SAY AND HOW YOU FEEL, OLD MAN.
LET'S GO BACK ...
... TO THE PRESENT.

I KNEW...
IT'S JUST LIKE THE OLD MAN SAID.
THERE'S ONLY ONE THING...
...YOU WOULD UNDERSTAND.
...I CAN DO FOR SHAO.

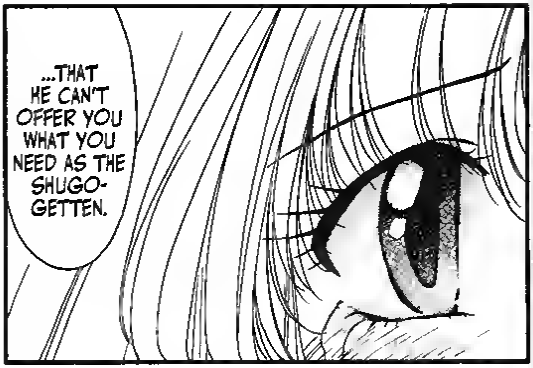
THEN I WILL ACCEPT...
IF THAT...
...HELPS HER, EVEN A LITTLE BIT...
...THAT I CAN NEVER SEE HER AGAIN.

IN ONE WEEK...
I WILL BRING SHAORIN TO YOU.
AT THAT TIME...
...YOU WILL BID HER YOUR FINAL FARE-WELL.
TRY YOUR BEST TO MAKE THIS EASIER ON HER.
I AM COUNT-ING ON YOU.
...AS THE SHUGOGETTEN'S LIEGE.
...YOUR FINAL TASK...
THIS IS...

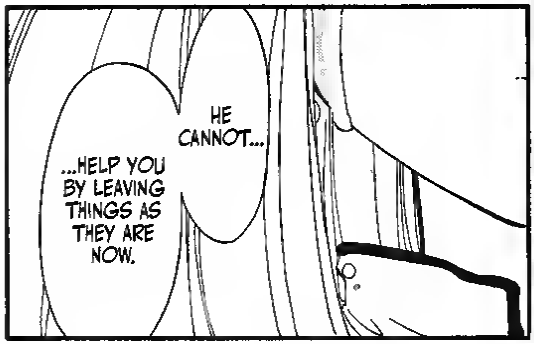
.....
MR. IZUMO WON US SOME GOLDFISH.
I THOUGHT THEY COULD LIVE IN THE AQUARIUM AT HOME.
.....
SORRY, FISHIES
I...
SHAO PROB-ABLY...
...WON'T BE ABLE TO SEE YOU GUYS ANYMORE.


...HAVE TO...
...TELL SHAO...
...NOT TO...
...COME HERE ANYMORE.

THE PAIN YOU'RE FEELING IS ONLY TEMPO-RARY.
SHAO-RIN.
PLEASE TRY TO UNDER-STAND.
...WATCH YOU GET CLOSER TO THE KID...
BUT I CANNOT STAND ASIDE AND...
IT WILL GET EASIER.
...AND HAVE YOU SUF-FER...
...EVEN MORE LATER ON.


...THAT HE CAN'T OFFER YOU WHAT YOU NEED AS THE SHUGO-GETTEN.

AND...
...HE UNDER-STANDS...


HE CANNOT...
...HELP YOU BY LEAVING THINGS AS THEY ARE NOW.

...TO HAVE YOU STAY AT HIS HOME.
THAT IS WHY...
...HE CAN NO LONGER CONSIDER IT WISE...

HE HAS A KIND SOUL.
I SEE THAT HE WAS WORTHY TO BE THE SHUGO-GETTEN'S LIEGE.

HEY, SHAO...
...CAN YOU HEAR ME?
I'M SOR-RY.
I JUST MADE A PROMISE THAT...
...I'D HELP YOU WHEN YOU NEEDED HELP.
BUT...

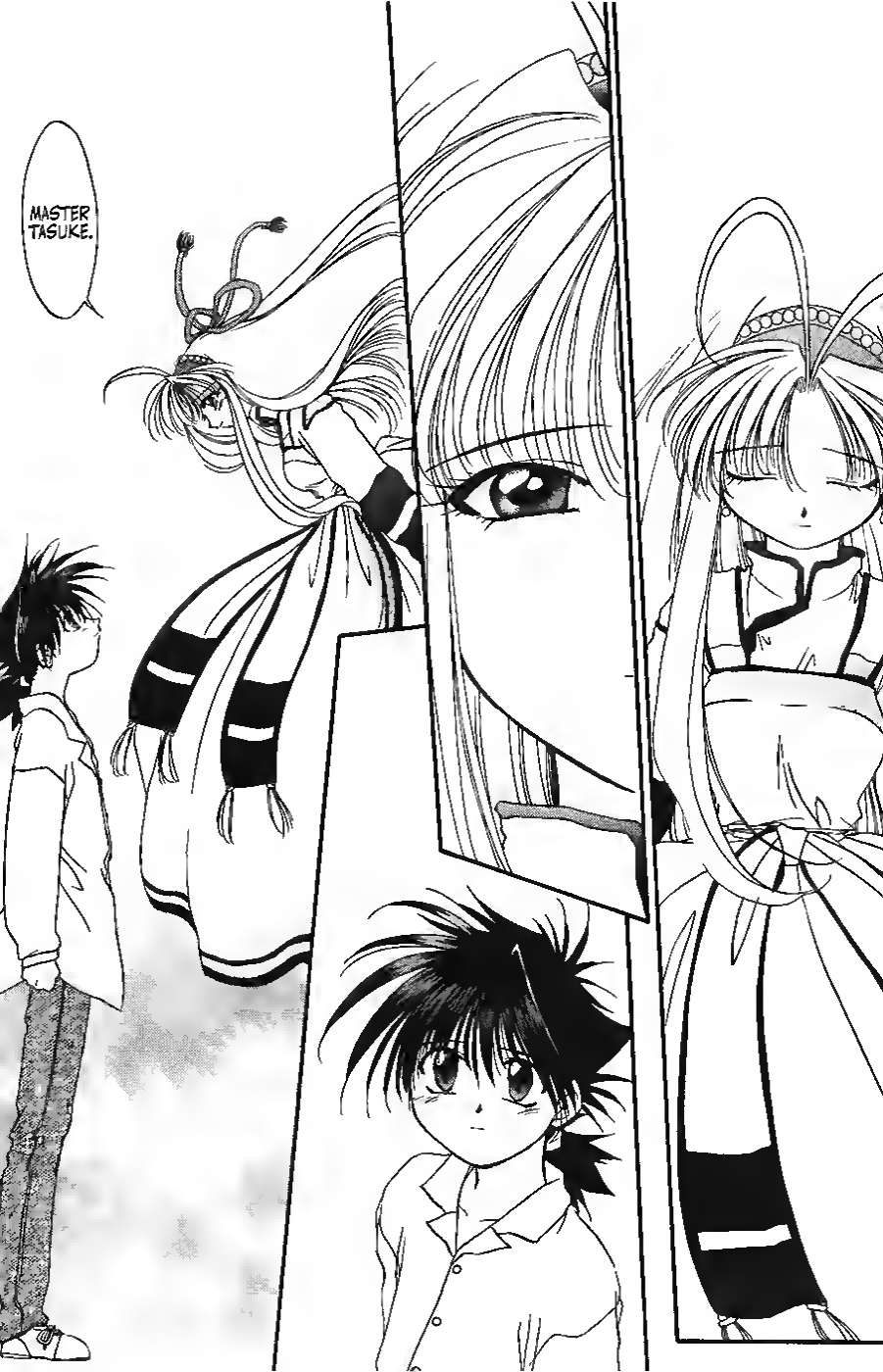
...THE OLD MAN HAS SHOWN ME...
...THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO FOR YOU.
I'M SORRY.
SORRY.
I'M REALLY...
...REALLY SORRY.
MASTER TASUKE...?

WHY ARE YOU APOLOGIZING?
I'M...
...THE ONE WHO SHOULD BE...
...SORRY.
I'M MAKING YOU SAD AGAIN.
IT'S ME WHO COULDN'T PROTECT YOU...
...FROM THE SOLITUDE AND LONELINESS IN YOUR SOUL.

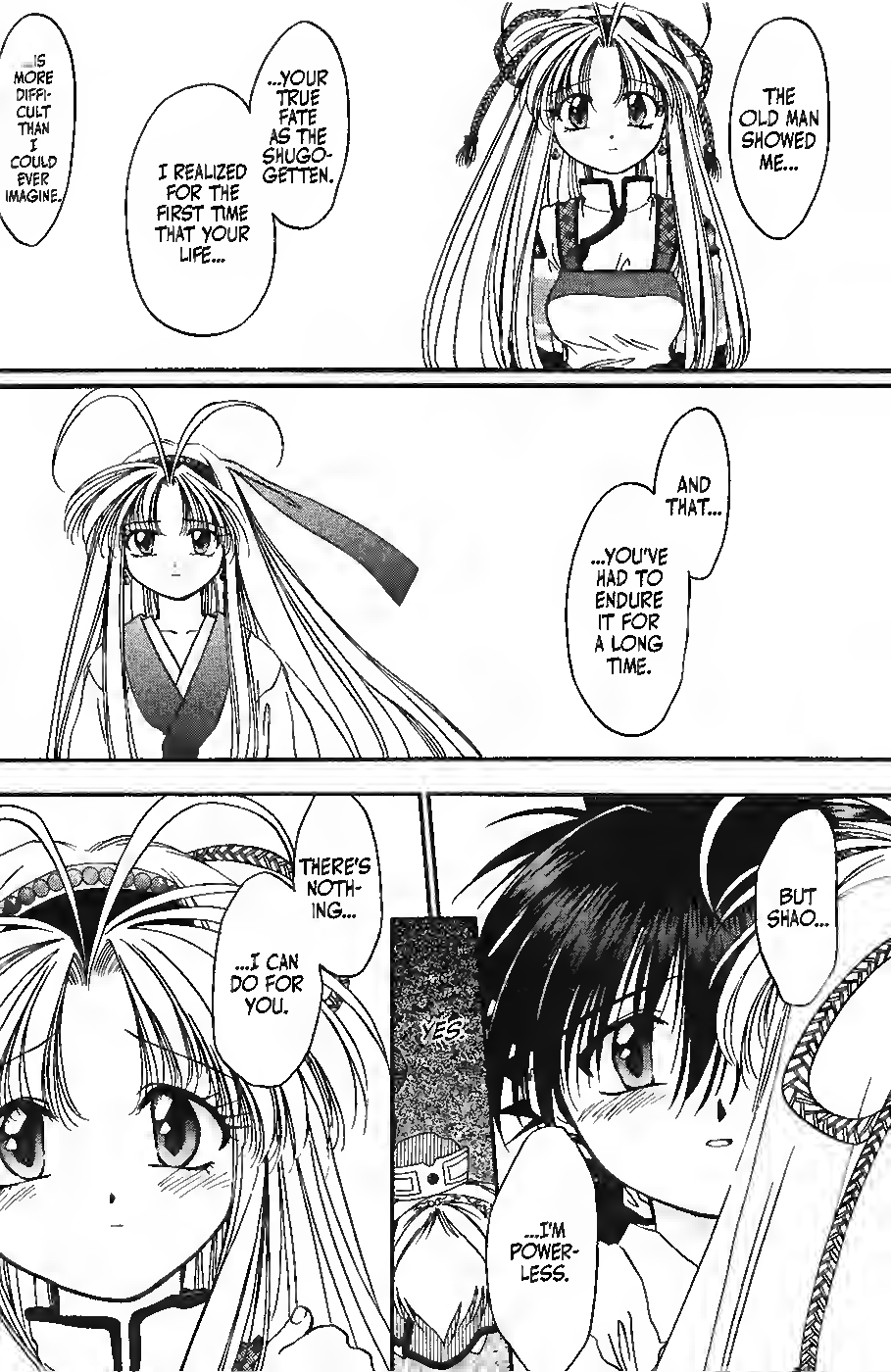
...IF IT WERE ALLOWED...
EVEN SO...
...THERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT I, THE SHUGOGETTEN, CAN'T PROTECT YOU FROM.
SINCE I'VE BEEN AWAY FROM YOU, I'VE REALIZED THAT...
...I'D WISH...
...THERE ARE SOME KINDS OF SUFFERING THAT I CANNOT MAKE BETTER BECAUSE I'M NOT A HUMAN.
...TO RETURN TO YOU RIGHT AWAY.

...I WANT TO BE WITH YOU.
BECAUSE...
!!
.....

KID...
...ARE YOU ABOUT READY NOW?
NIAN
THEN...
...IT IS TIME TO SAY GOOD-BYE TO SHAORIN.


MASTER TASUKE.

SHAO...
I...
...HAVE SOME-THING IMPORTANT I HAVE TO SAY TO YOU.
WOULD YOU PLEASE LISTEN?


THE OLD MAN SHOWED ME...
...YOUR TRUE FATE AS THE SHUGO-GETTEN.
I REALIZED FOR THE FIRST TIME THAT YOUR LIFE...
...IS MORE DIFFI-CULT THAN I COULD EVER IMAGINE.
AND THAT...
...YOU'VE HAD TO ENDURE IT FOR A LONG TIME.
BUT SHAO...
...I'M POWER-LESS.
YES.
THERE'S NOTH-ING...
...I CAN DO FOR YOU.

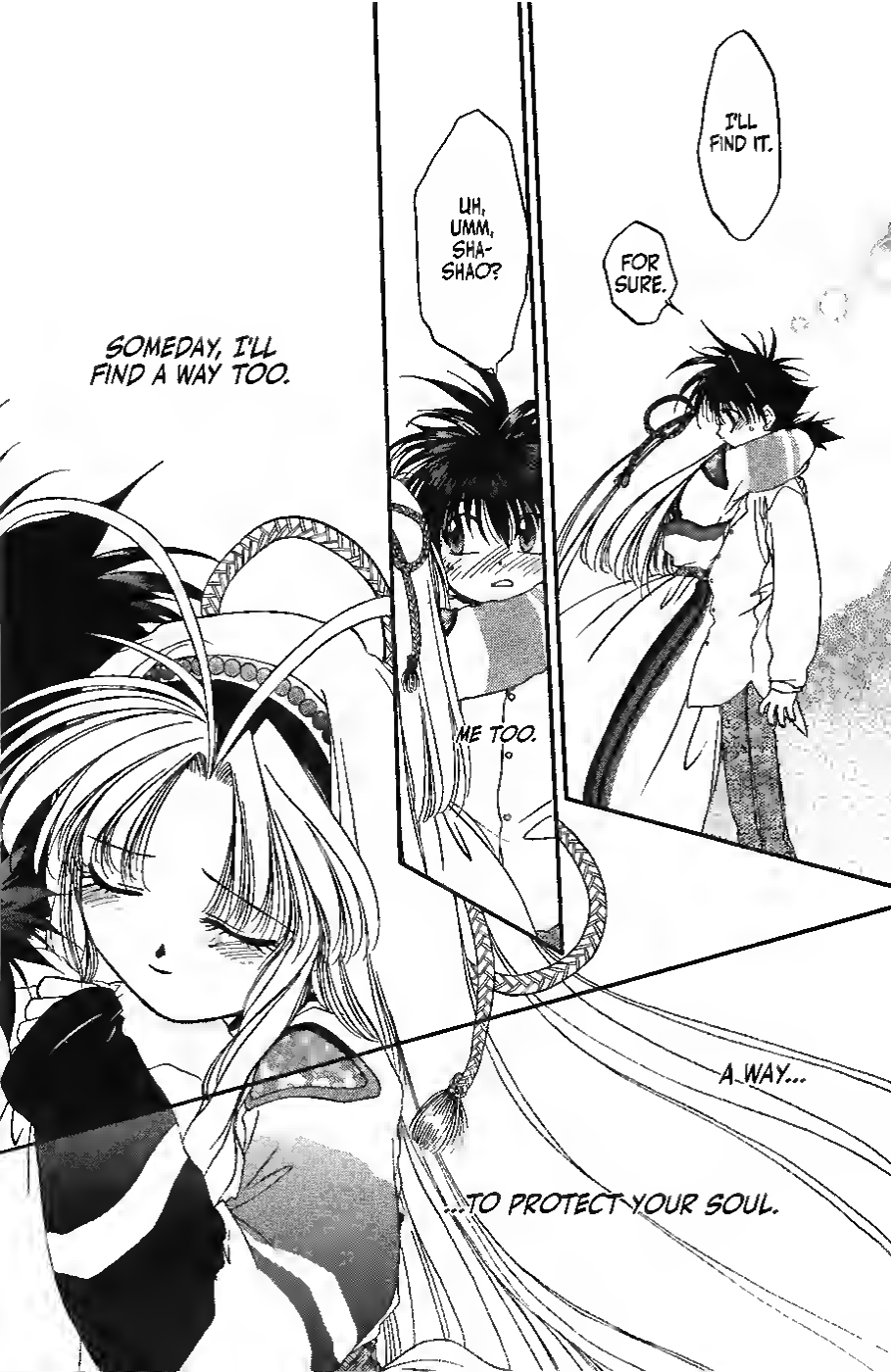
OH...
NO...
I HAVE TO...
...TELL SHAO NOT TO...
...COME HERE ANYMORE.

I KNOW I CAN'T DO ANYTHING FOR YOU...
...I HEARD YOUR VOICE EARLIER...
...SHAO.
...BUT...
YOU KNOW...
...THAT ONE DAY...
...YOU'LL HAVE TO SAY GOOD-BYE TO ME TOO...
BUT YOU STILL WANT TO...
...STAY WITH ME, DON'T YOU?

HONESTLY, I...
THERE'S NO WAY...
...I CAN SAY GOOD-BYE.
THEN I...
...CAN'T SAY WHAT I'M SUP POSED TO SAY
WHAT?!
?!!
...WANT TO BE WITH YOU...
...FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART, SHAO.

B--
BOY, YOU...
THUD
SORRY, OLD MAN.
I REALLY DO UNDERSTAND HOW YOU FEEL.
BUT I CAN'T LET...
...SHAO GO.

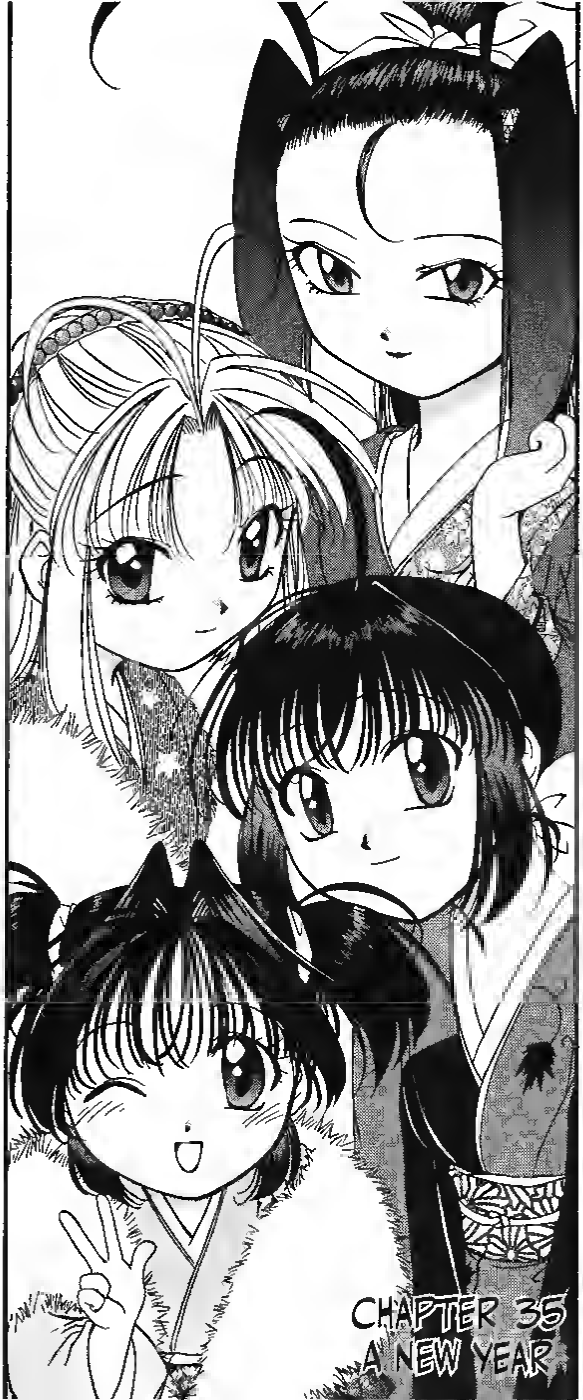
I'VE MADE UP MY MIND...
...TO FIND IT.
I'LL FIND A WAY FOR SHAO TO STAY...
...SO SHE WON'T HAVE TO SUFFER LIKE THAT...
...WHILE...
...I'M HER MASTER.


I'LL FIND IT.
FOR SURE.
UH, UMM, SHA-SHAO?
SOMEDAY, I'LL FIND A WAY TOO.
ME TOO.
A WAY...
...TO PROTECT YOUR SOUL.

I DOUBT...
...HE CAN ACTUALLY SUCCEED...
...IN CHANGING THE FATE OF THE SHUGOGETTEN.
SILLY HUMAN.
.....
IT'S A CENTURY TOO SOON FOR THAT HAND!!
BUT MAYBE I'LL JUST KEEP AN EYE ON THEM FOR NOW.

...SHAORIN!
SHAO!!
MISS...
OH, AND TASUKE TOO.
AND SO...
...THINGS RETURNED TO NORMAL.
はい!?
EXCUSE ME?
?
EVEN THOUGH IT'S SUCH A JOYOUS TIME WHEN YOU GET TO CHOOSE A NEW MASTER, I HEARD YOU HAD TO SPEND A WHOLE DAY CONVINCING TASUKE TO GO ALONG.
WELL, MISS SHAORIN.
RUUAAAAN!
WHAT A DIFFICULT TASK. IF I MAY, I'D LIKE TO OFFER MYSELF AS--
YOU'RE GOING TO PICK ME, OF COURSE, RIGHT?
LATE START
MISS RUUAN, YOU'RE GOING TO MAKE UP FOR ALL THE NIGHT SHIFTS YOU'VE MISSED, ALL AT ONCE!!
ACTUALLY, SHE SKIPPED OUT LAST NIGHT TOO.
THREE CONTINUOUS NIGHTS OF NIGHT SHIFT HELL

THE FIRST DAY OF THE NEW YEAR
A NEW AND DIFFERENT YEAR
WHAT ABOUT ME?
WILL I...
... BECOME ...
...A NEW ME TOO?


CHAPTER 35
A NEW YEAR

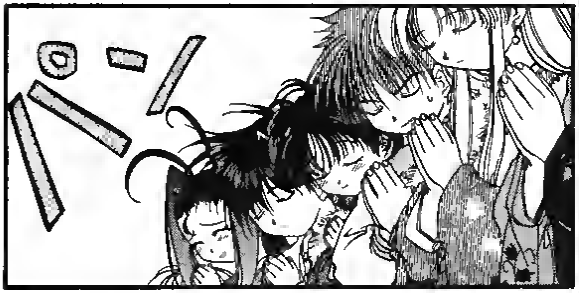
SHAO...
SHAO...
WH--
WHY ARE YOU SO KEEN ON THE MIYAUCHI SHRINE?
WH-WHY? WHY HERE?!
LET'S GO PAY OUR FIRST RESPECTS OF THE YEAR AT THE MIYAUCHI SHRINE
WHY DO YOU SAY THAT?
ANYWHERE BUT THE MIYAUCHI SHRINE!!
NOT THE MIYAUCHI SHRINE!
ばく ばく ばく
HUMPH ...
RUNNING AWAY FROM YOUR RIVAL AT THE START OF A NEW YEAR... HOW...
THAT'S EXACTLY WHY I DON'T WANT TO GO THERE!!
BECAUSE WE GET TO SEE MR. IZUMO THERE!!
WE HAVE TO GIVE HIM OUR NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS.♡

PATHETIC!!
情けない
...PA-THETIC.
がっ
がっ?
ガン
"PATHETIC." TO FEEL DEFEAT AT THE MERE MENTION OF HIS NAME IS, AT BEST, PATHETIC.
A HAIKU FOR THE NEW YEAR BY TASUKE
TOO MANY SYLLABLES.
IT'S BEEN SUUUCH A LONG TIME!!
IT'S THE MIYAUCHI SHRINE. ♡
OOH!
SIGN READS MIYAUCHI SHRINE

MISS SHOUKO!
SHAO! AND TASUKE AND MISS RUUAN.
HAPPY NEW YEAR! ♡
SH—
SHOUKO, WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?!
HOW RUDE.
VISITING A SHRINE FIRST THING ON NEW YEAR'S WHAT ELSE?
YOU FEELING BRAVER THIS YEAR?
I DIDN'T COME HERE BECAUSE I WANTED TO!!
MARCHING IN ON THE ENEMY TERRITORY? INTERESTING. BUT HEY, BEST OF LUCK.

WHY, IF IT ISN'T MY FAVORITE, MISS SHAORIN!
す…
HERE HE COMES...
AHH, HEARING MISS SHAORIN'S GENTLE VOICE FOR THE FIRST TIME THIS YEAR...
ささ
...SOOTHES MY WORK-WORN SOUL.
AAHH.
ふわぁ
FLUFF
MR. IZUMO!
HAPPY NEW YEAR.
BEING A PRIEST MUST BE REEEALLY HARD WORK!!
IN FACT, I'M SURE YOU'RE TOO BUSY TO TALK TO US, RIGHT?
MASTER TASUKE AND MR. IZUMO MUST BE CLOSE FRIENDS.
THEY GAZE INTO EACH OTHER'S EYES A LOT
バチ
YOU THINK SO?

OKAY, MASTER TAO. NOW FOR THE COTTON CANDY CART.
WHILE WE WERE BUSY, THEY ALL FLOCKED TOGETHER LIKE BUZZARDS.
OOH! IT'S TASUKE!
SHAO!!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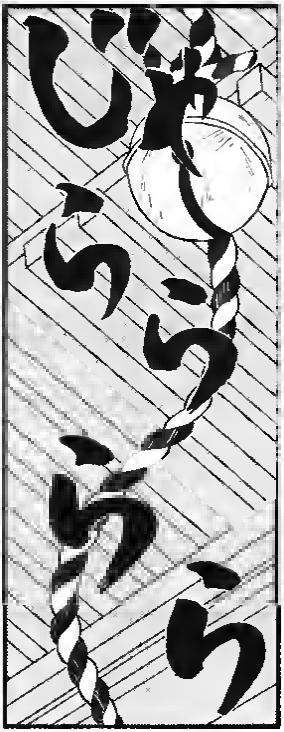
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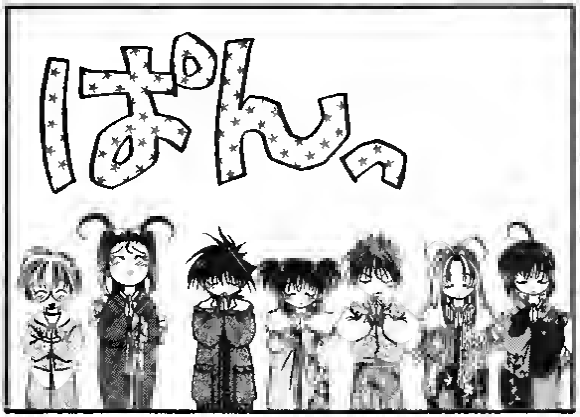
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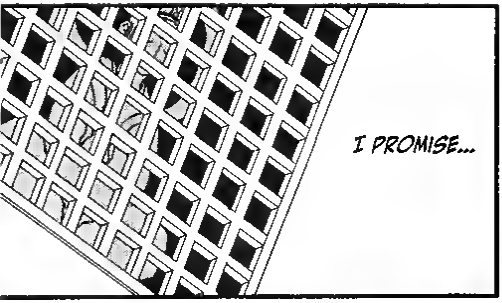

I PROMISE...

DEAR GOD...

...TO PROTECT SHAO. I WON'T LET HER SUFFER ANYMORE.
SO PLEASE, GOD...

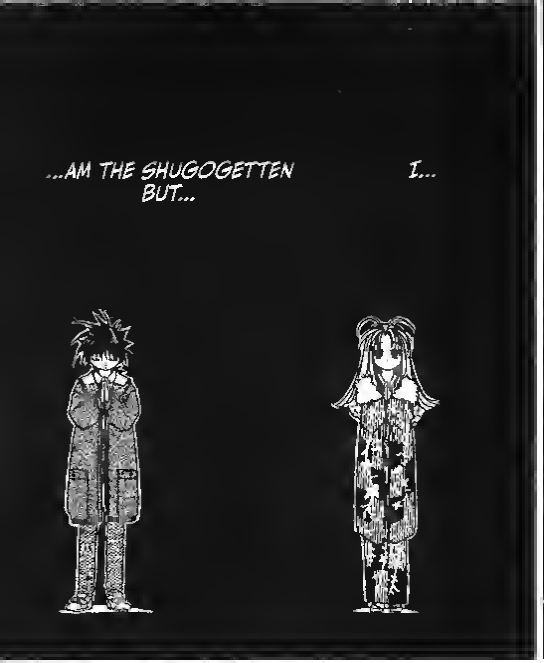
WELL.. MAYBE THAT'S...
...NOT SOMETHING I SHOULD ASK YOU FOR...

TH-TH-TH-THIS YEAR...
...AT LEAST LET ME HAVE ONE K-KISS!!

DEAR GOD.
GOD OF LOVE.
PLEASE LET KAORI AND TASUKE SHARE THEIR LOVE THIS YEAR, FOR SURE!! EEK! PLEASE!
NNGH!
DEAR GOD!!
PLEASE LET SHAO UNDERSTAND MY BURNING FLAMES OF LOVE FOR HER THIS YEAR!!
OOHH...
TEE HEE.
OH, NO, RUUAN'S EMBARRASSED!!
DEAR GOD!!
I'M SO HAPPY TO BE NEXT TO MISS RUUAN.
LOOKS LIKE SHE'S LOST IN A FANTASY.

THESE INVISIBLE PASSIONS...
...SWIRL AND RAGE AROUND ME IN A WHIRLWIND.
おぉぉ
.....?

...ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS ASK, AND I'LL HELP YOU.
IF YOU NEED HELP...
I JUST...
...WANT TO BE WITH SHAO, THAT'S ALL!!
I'VE MADE UP MY MIND TO FIND IT.
I'LL FIND A WAY FOR SHAO TO STAY SO SHE WON'T HAVE TO SUFFER...
...WHILE I'M HER MASTER.
OH, GOD...


...AM THE SHUGOGETTEN BUT...
I...

DEAR GOD...

...IF I RELY ON MASTER TASUKE...
...JUST A LITTLE BIT?

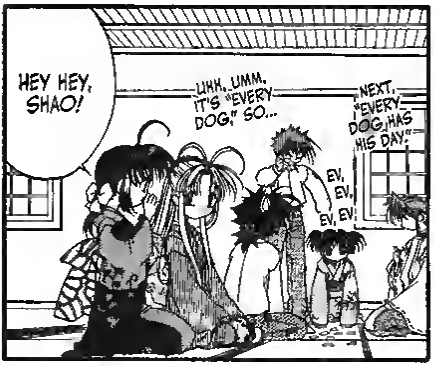
IS IT OKAY...

...IS IT ALL RIGHT IF...
...I LET ALL THE THINGS THAT MASTER TASUKE TRIES TO DO FOR ME MAKE ME HAPPY?

HEY HEY, TASUKE.
IF YOU DON'T HAVE SOMETHING TO DO AFTER THIS...
...DO YOU WANNA HAVE A "NEW YEAR'S CARD TOURNAMENT"?!
I JUST WANT TO GO HOME AND RELAX.
KAORI, YOU HAVE SO MUCH ENERGY THIS NEW YEAR.
† SPOKEN LIKE AN OLD MAN
DON'T YOU HAVE TO WORK?!!!
THAT SOUNDS FUN. LET'S DO IT.
IF YOU NEED A ROOM, I'LL LEND YOU ONE.
IS IT ALL RIGHT...
...IF I CHANGE... JUST A LITTLE BIT?

ARE YOU SURE YOU HAVE TIME TO PLAY?
TODAY'S ONE OF THE SHRINE'S BUSIEST DAYS, YOU KNOW!
"PENNIES FROM HEAVEN."
PEN, PEN, PEN...
NOTE: IN THIS GAME, YOU ARE SUPPOSED TO LOOK FOR THE CARD THAT MATCHES THE FIRST SYLLABLE OF THE PHRASE SOMEONE ELSE READS
WELL THEN, LET'S BEGIN.
UH UH UH.
YOU KNOW, IN THIS CARD GAME...
すぐっとね
...YOU AREN'T SUPPOSED TO JUST LOOK FOR THINGS BLINDLY.
PEN, PEN, PEN, PEN.
IN THIS CASE, THE WORDS, "PENNIES FROM HEAVEN"...
...ARE A CLUE TO FINDING THE WINNING CARD!!

ARGH!!
YES.


HEY HEY, SHAO!
UHH, UMM. IT'S "EVERY DOG," SO...
"NEXT, "EVERY DOG HAS HIS DAY"--
EV, EV, EV, EV!

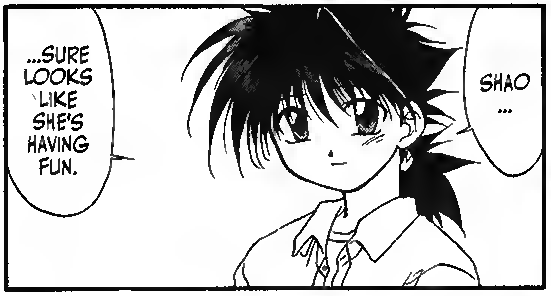
DO YOU KNOW ABOUT "NEW YEAR'S CARD TOURNAMENTS"?

IF YOU GO LIKE THIS!!
AND LIKE THAT!
HUH?
THEN SUBCONSCIOUSLY YOUR SOUL IS DRAWN TO THE MATCHING CARD!!
HE'S LOST US AGAIN...

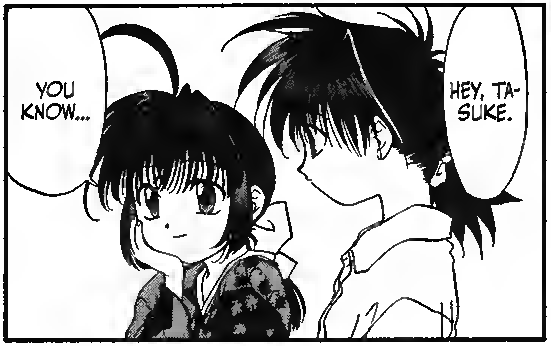
.....
THE ONE WHO GETS THE MOST CARDS IN THE CARD TOURNA-MENT...
...WILL HAVE THEIR WISH GRANTED.
cats
THEN, NEXT...
"OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND."
JUST LOOK FOR IT ALREADY. 6
OUT, OUT, OUT, OUT, OUT, OUT, OUT.
OUT OF SIGHT, EH?
HMM...
YES!!
!!

ME NEI-THER!
I WON'T LOSE!!

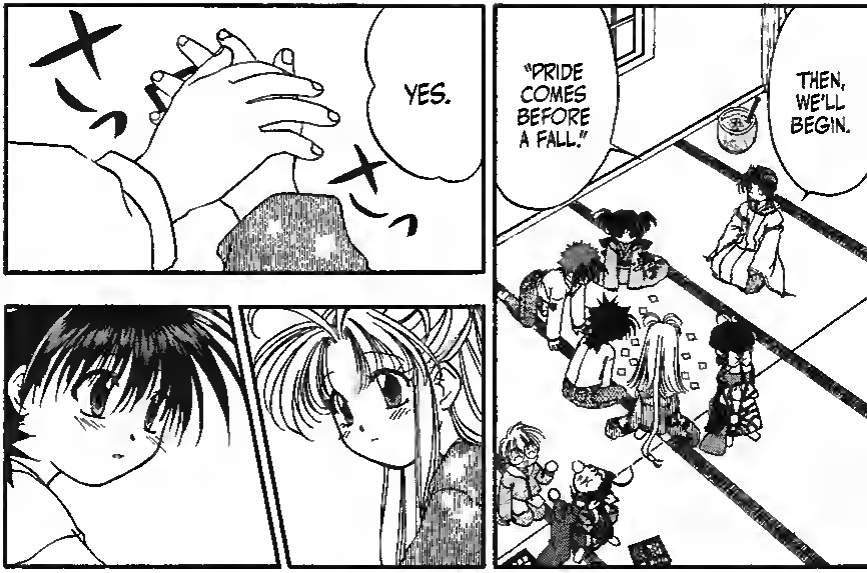
N'GGGH.
YOU GO, GIRL!!
OKAAY, I'M NOT GOING TO LOSE, SHAO!!

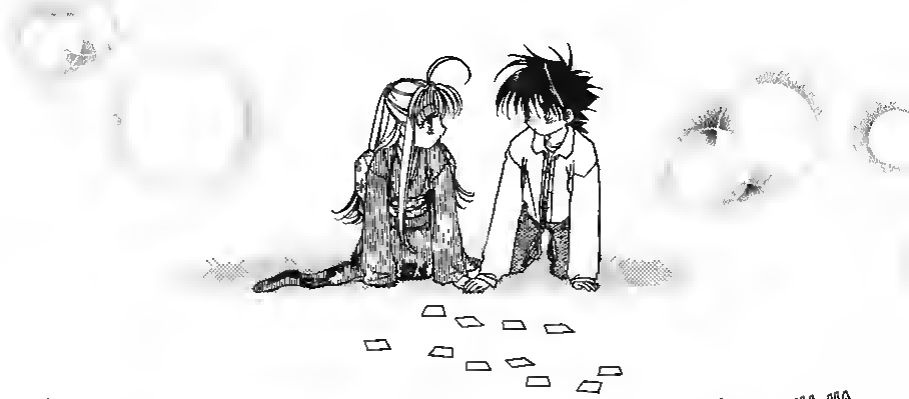

...SURE LOOKS LIKE SHE'S HAVING FUN.
SHAO ...

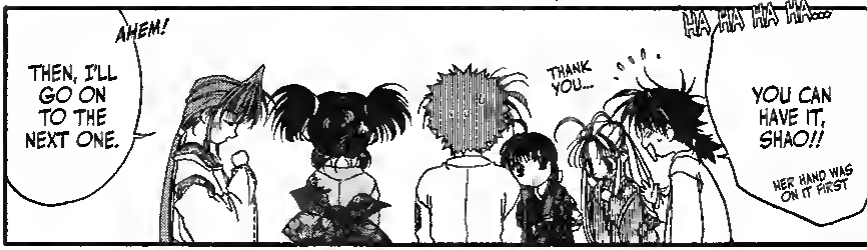
.....
"TODAY'S FRIEND IS TOMORROW'S ENEMY"!!
YEEES!!


YOU KNOW...
HEY, TA-SUKE.

YEAH.
SHE DOES, HUH?
SHE SEEMS DIFFERENT.
...I THINK SHAO'S CHANGED SOMEHOW.
HEY, SHOUKO?
I WANNA PLAY TOO!!
ずいっ
BUT WHAT MAKES YOU SAY THAT?
DON'T SIT THERE LIKE AN OLD FART!!
TASUKE, COME ON!!
THAT LOOKS HELLA FUN!


YES.
"PRIDE COMES BEFORE A FALL."
THEN, WE'LL BEGIN.




AHEM!
THEN, I'LL GO ON TO THE NEXT ONE.
THANK YOU...
HA HA HA HA
YOU CAN HAVE IT, SHAO!!
HER HAND WAS ON IT FIRST

"CASTING PEARLS BEFORE SWINE"...
CASTING PEARLS BEFORE SWINE.
YES!!
YES.
"LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP."
"TO ENJOY IS TO EXCEL."
HUH..?
YES!
"GOOD THINGS COME TO THOSE WHO WAIT."

I CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE!!
ENOUGH ALREADY!
ACK!!
MASTER TASU-KEE!!
I'M...
I'M NOT DOING THIS ON PURPOSE
WHA...? NO...
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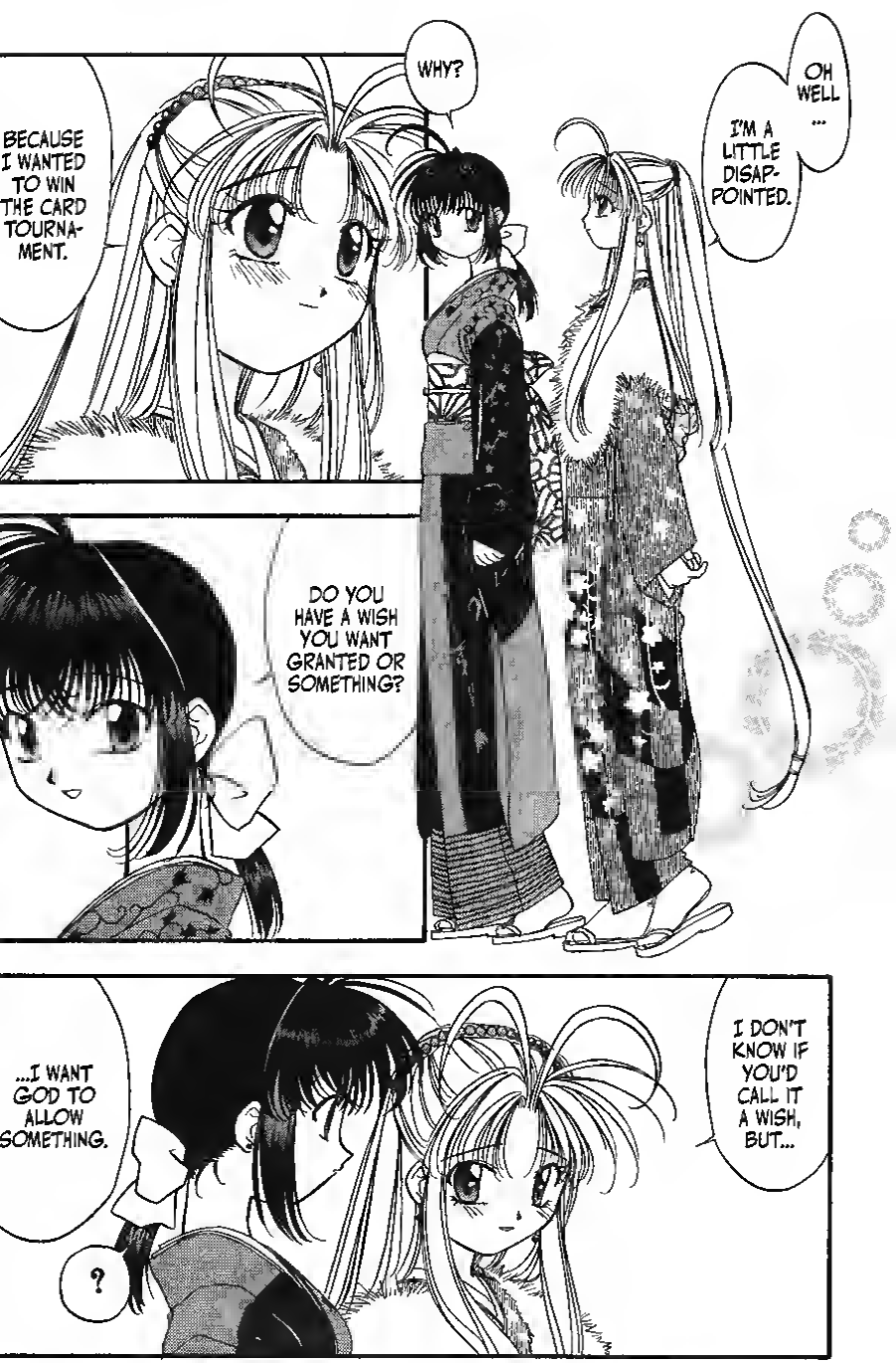
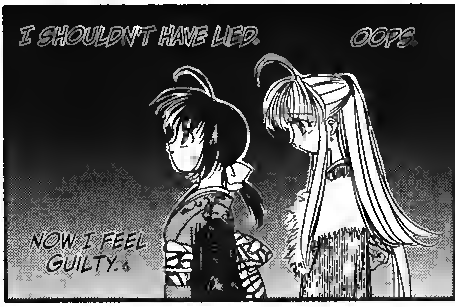

OH WELL ...
I'M A LITTLE DISAP-POINTED.
WHY?
BECAUSE I WANTED TO WIN THE CARD TOURNA-MENT.
DO YOU HAVE A WISH YOU WANT GRANTED OR SOMETHING?
I DON'T KNOW IF YOU'D CALL IT A WISH, BUT...
...I WANT GOD TO ALLOW SOMETHING.
?

MASTER TASUKE
...ONCE SAID...
...I COULD ...
... RELY ON HIM.
I'LL FIND A WAY FOR SHAO TO STAY SO SHE WON'T HAVE TO SUFFER.
I'VE MADE UP MY MIND TO FIND IT.
BUT...

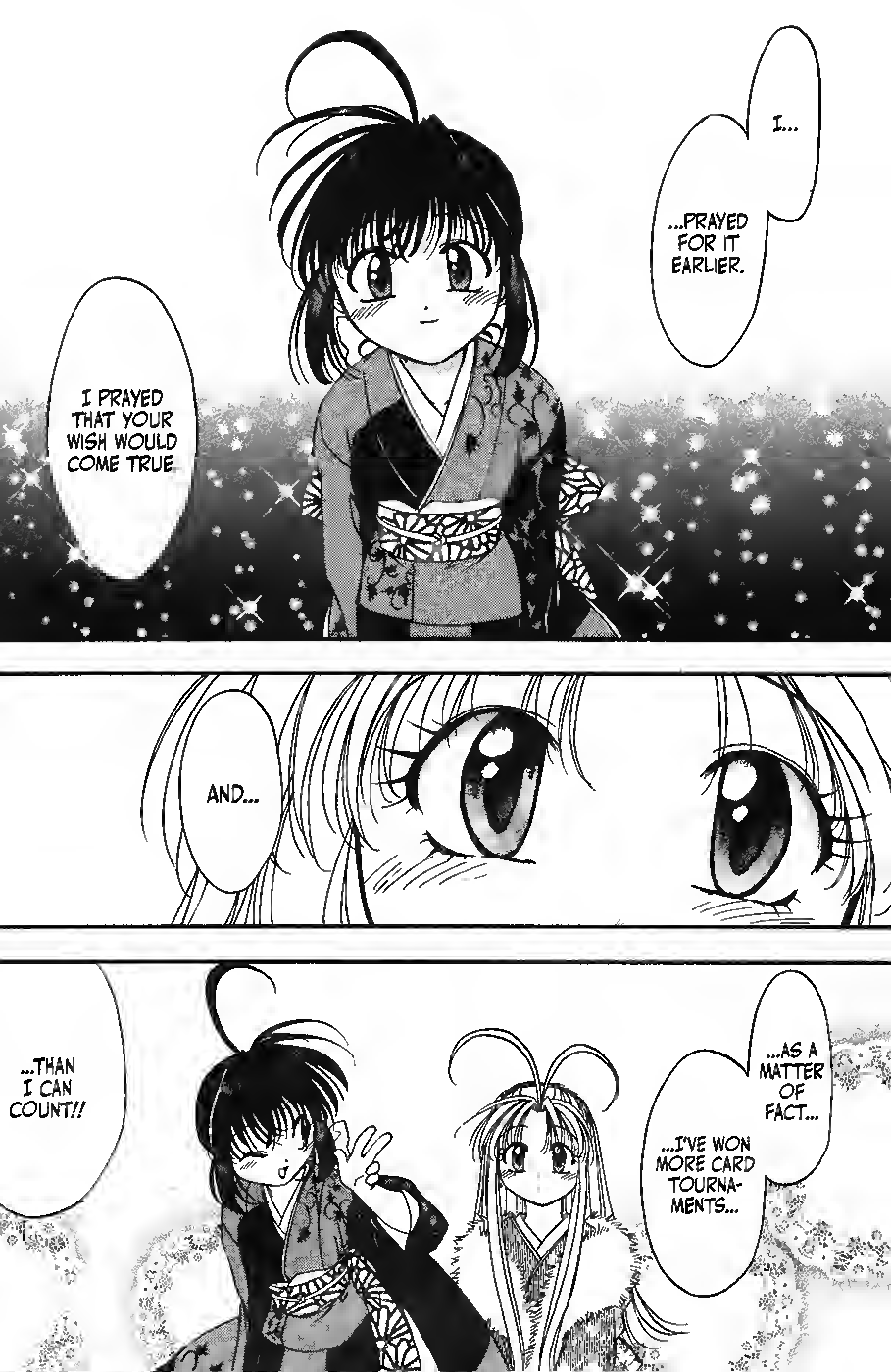
...I DON'T KNOW IF...
I'M NOT SURE...
...IT'S OKAY FOR THE SHUGO-GETTEN TO RELY ON HER MASTER.
...IF IT'S OKAY FOR ME TO CHANGE.
EVEN IF I ASK GOD...
...HE WON'T TELL ME THE ANSWER.
THAT'S WHY I WANTED TO WIN THE CARD TOURNA-MENT AND...
...HAVE HIM APPROVE.

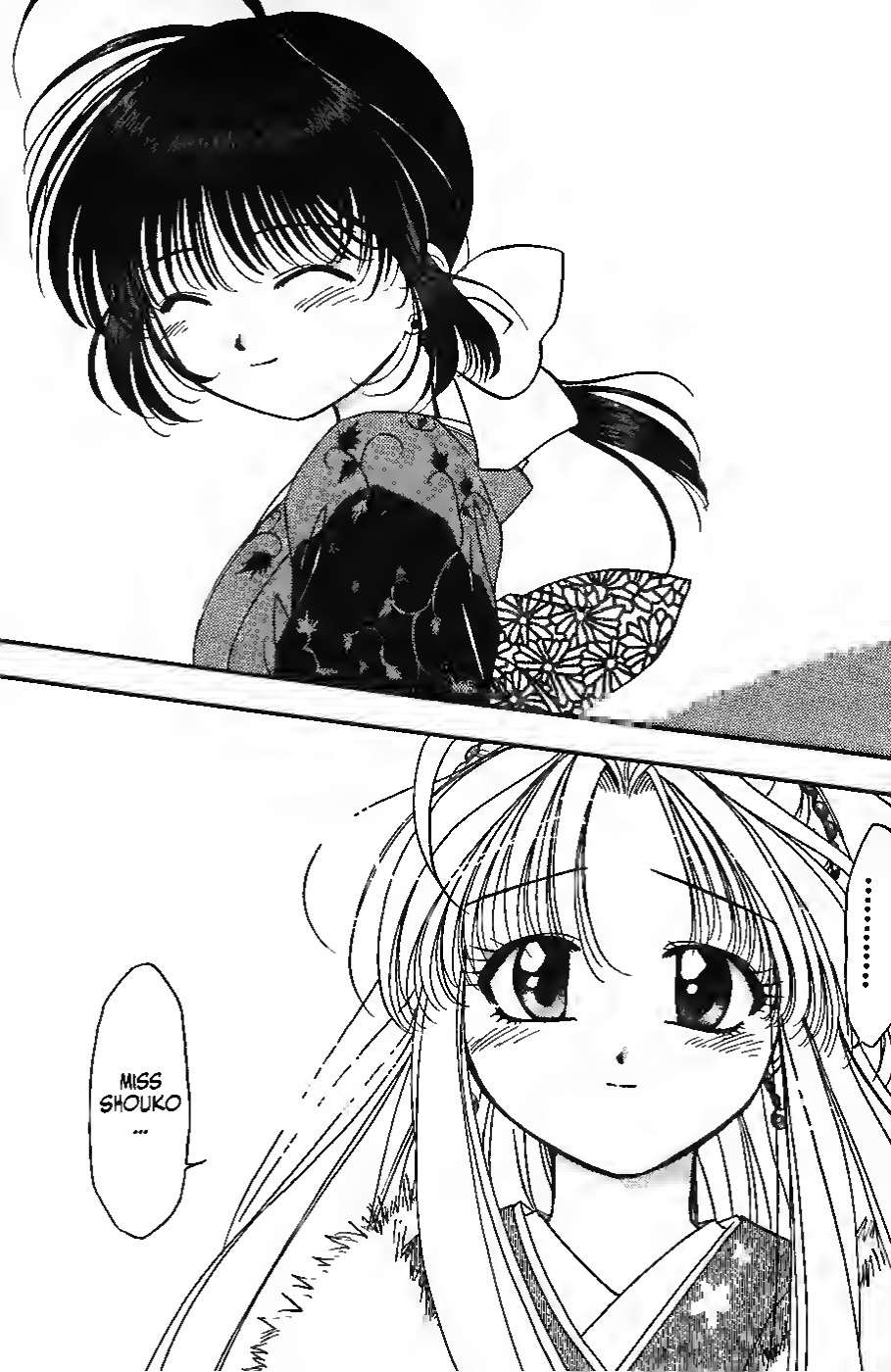
SHAO!
ぴょいん


I SHOULDN'T HAVE LIED.
OOPS.
NOW I FEEL GUILTY.

...I GUESS THERE'S NO REAL HARM DONE
BUT...

SHAO, IT'S OKAY...
...IF YOU CHANGE ...
...AND RELY ON TASUKE.
GOD DOES APPROVE.


I...
...PRAYED FOR IT EARLIER.
I PRAYED THAT YOUR WISH WOULD COME TRUE
AND...
...AS A MATTER OF FACT...
...I'VE WON MORE CARD TOURNA-MENTS...
...THAN I CAN COUNT!!


MISS SHOUKO ...
.....

THANK YOU.
A NEW YEAR.
THE BEGINNING OF A NEW AND DIFFERENT YEAR.

...MASTER TASUKE'S SOUL.
AND, I'M SURE, I'LL BE ABLE TO PRO-TECT.
I KNOW I'LL BE...
...ABLE TO BE-COME A NEW ME TOO.
PLEASE, MASTER TASUKE...
I'M SURE OF IT.

PLEASE BE GOOD TO ME THIS YEAR TOO.